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ABSTRACT

The legal history of censorship in general in the United States as well as the legal context in particular of the censorship of novels from schools is discussed. This thesis deals with four novels which have aroused substantial controversy when taught in the schools. The novels are: "The Catcher in the Rye," by J. D. Salinger, "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," by Mark Twain, "The Grapes of Wrath," by John Steinbeck, and "1984" by George Orwell. These novels meet two criteria. First, they have frequently been attacked by censors and banned from the schools. Secondly, they are novels which teachers have attempted to defend and which literary critics have often praised. The thesis examines differing viewpoints of these four novels, showing how censors react to certain aspects of the books, how these reactions are alike and different from the reactions of professional literary critics, and what censors and critics both imply about the function of literature in the schools. This thesis, in conclusion, summarizes and examines more closely certain intellectual positions concerning the function of literature in the schools. It considers the novel's role as a means of entertainment and edification. Finally, it is pointed out that teachers must learn to defend their choice of literature as censorship is unlikely to cease. (Author/CK)

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CONTROVERSIAL NOVELS AND CENSORSHIP IN THE SCHOOLS

JOHN STUART KATZ

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of
the Graduate School of Education
of Harvard University

In partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree
of Doctor of Education
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ABSTRACT

CONTROVERSIAL NOVELS AND CENSORSHIP IN THE SCHOOLS

John Stuart Katz

Since American public secondary schools usually do not prescribe the entire curriculum in literature, teachers typically use some materials of their own choosing. Frequently, controversies occur when someone objects to certain novels. Censors, those who have called for the removal of these books from schools, have been students, teachers, parents, ministers, and members of patriotic, religious, and racial organizations. Such censorship of books used in the schools, however, is not indigenous to any particular period in the history of American education, nor is it indigenous to any particular geographical section of the country, type of community, or organization. As background to the examination of controversial novels and censorship in the schools, this thesis begins by inquiring who some of the censors are and how they operate. The thesis then briefly discusses the legal history of censorship in general in the United States as well as the legal context in particular of the censorship of novels from schools.

The thesis deals with four novels which have aroused substantial controversy when taught in the schools. The novels are The Catcher in the Rye by J. D. Salinger, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain, The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck, and 1984 by George Orwell. These novels meet two criteria. First, they have frequently been attacked by censors and banned from the schools. Secondly, they are novels which teachers have attempted to defend and which literary critics have often praised. They are not necessarily the most controversial novels, but they do represent the types of works around which controversies occur.

The thesis is not an historical investigation of particular cases of censorship, nor is it a psychological, sociological, or philosophical study of censorship in the schools. Rather, it examines differing viewpoints of these four controversial novels in the schools, showing how censors react to certain aspects of the books, how these reactions are alike and different from the reactions of professional literary critics, and what censors and critics both imply about the function of literature in the schools. The thesis is organized according to aspects of controversial novels to which censors object and upon which literary critics have also commented. They are the following: 1) the language of the novel, 2) the characters of the novel, and 3) the social, political, and racial attitudes expressed in the novel.

Objections to the language of these four novels range from vehement attacks upon the graffitti Holden Caulfield finds scratched upon walls in New York City to complaints about the dialects in The Grapes of Wrath and The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. Critics sometimes agree with the basic assumptions of some censors that adolescent readers might use obscene words if they see them in books, that they might use faulty grammar if they see faulty grammar, that they might use the word "nigger" if they see it in print. Most of the critics, however, deny this assumption. In praising the novels for their language, critics have commented upon why the author uses taboo words or colloquial speech in the context of the complete novel as a work of art. Many critics have stated or implied that readers need not copy the language they read, but can, by reading these novels see how and why taboo words and dialects exist and how they contribute to the novel as a work of art.

Secondly, censors often object to the characters in these novels. When they see the characters as real people with whom they would not like adolescent readers to associate, they have tried to remove the books from schools. Some censors imply that reading about disreputable characters might cause the adolescent reader to act in anti-social or undesirable ways. Censors are particularly sensitive to characters who come into contact with sex or violence or who are alienated, non-conforming, or even ungenteel. Some critics agree with censors' evaluations of the characters, but most of them do not view the characters as literally as do the censors. Most critics see the characters symbolically, as representations, not as real people. Critics do differ in their comments concerning the artistic success of the author in creating realistic, believable characters. Some critics believe, furthermore, that if a character is successfully portrayed, the reader can gain a catharsis from viewing his actions, no matter how degenerate the character is. The reader, then, instead of copying the actions of the character, would be relieved of the need to do so.

Thirdly, censors find social, political, and racial attitudes to which they object in these novels. If the censor detects criticism of American society, of religion, of the status quo, of patriotism, or of racial relationships in a novel, he has often called for the removal of the book from the schools. Censors who often interpret any attitudes they see expressed in the novel as the attitudes of the author himself, imply that certain authors promote racial, religious or other prejudice, anti-Americanism, immorality, and despair through their works. Again, some critics agree with the assumptions of censors concerning the author's attitudes and the effect the attitudes might have upon the reader. Most critics, however, may agree that the author has the attitude the censor says he has, but they usually imply that the author's criticism is well taken and is appropriate in the context of the novel and the time in which it was written.

This thesis, in conclusion, summarizes and examines more closely certain intellectual positions concerning the function of literature in the schools. It considers the novel's role as a means of entertainment and edification. These two terms come from Horace's discussion of poetry as dulce and utile. Critics' and censors' viewpoints in their approaches to literature are seen as ranging alone a continuum, in the middle of which are those implications shared by both. At one extreme of the continuum are those censors who believe that reading about anti-social behavior will cause anti-social behavior. At the other extreme are those critics who feel that the reader might be offered catharsis by reading about anti-social behavior. Censors seldom talk of the novel as an enjoyable object of art; seldom do they consider the work as a whole, as something which might be enjoyed. Instead, censors and some critics insist that the novel teach positive values and that it be a means of political and social acculturation. Most of the critics, on the other hand, do consider the aesthetic aspects of the novel and assess why an author presents the language, characters, and attitudes he does in the context of the complete novel, even if those aspects of the novel are critical of society or are sordid.

Censors will probably continue to object to certain books taught in the public schools even though the books to which they object most and the reasons for objections are likely to change. Language taboos change, but taboo words always exist. Novels which mention certain social and political problems become more or less relevant to the biases of censors with the passage of time. Patriotism and race, for example, seem to be increasing as centers for censorship controversies. Even though the grounds for controversy may shift according to the novels used and the objections of censors, controversial novels will remain.

Since censorship is unlikely to cease, teachers and those concerned with the English curriculum who do use controversial materials must be able to defend these materials. They must be familiar with what objections could arise and they must anticipate ways of responding. Teachers must be familiar with the books in question, with the professional literary criticism of the books, and with the atmosphere of restraints within the community in which they are to be taught.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE: THE CENSORS, THE CRITICS, AND THE BOOKS

Introduction

The teaching of English would be much less complicated if English teachers, administrators, educators and parents were suddenly to agree on one and only one sequential list of novels which all schools would teach. Fortunately, however, such an agreement is most unlikely. Max Rafferty can not look at his watch and proclaim, like the proverbial French Minister of Education, "All tenth graders in my state are now reading The Red Badge of Courage." Some of his students might, in fact, be reading The Catcher in the Rye; some might be reading 1984, and some might even be browsing through The Dictionary of American Slang.

Because of the absence of a prescriptive English curriculum, censorship controversies can develop. In most communities, teachers of English appear to have freedom to teach a novel, poems, a play, or an essay of their own choosing. The teacher might have his students buy a paperback novel not supplied by the school. The teacher might give his pupils a list of recommended works to be read outside of class. However, in choosing a novel to teach, in compiling a list of recommended books on his own, the teacher makes himself vulnerable to possible constraint from the community in which he is teaching.

The 1930's experienced an epidemic of censorship controversies which Howard K. Beale has reported in his classic study Are American Teachers Free? An anthology containing Vachel Lindsay's "The Congo," was banned in Boston lest Negro voters be offended; the word "nigger" was blotted from junior high textbooks by the Medford, Massachusetts School Board; William Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice was banned in Buffalo and Manchester, New York and removed from the schools of Syracuse and Seattle; an attempt was made to replace Silas Marner with more American tales of the heroes of New Hampshire.[1] Stories of Mayor "Big Bill" Thompson's banning of "pro-British" textbooks from the Chicago public schools in the 1930's have become almost legendary.

More recently, teachers have been censured, fired, and even jailed for teaching "objectionable" material in English class. In Thompson Township, Michigan, a teacher was imprisoned for assigning Albert Camus' The Stranger to his students.[2] Battles have raged in Alabama, Florida, New York, and Nebraska over Little Black Sambo, The Rabbits' Wedding (a black rabbit marries a white one), and a version of The Three Little Pigs (in which one is white, one black, and one is a mulatto).[3] Homer's Odyssey has been banned because it is non-Christian; the Merchant of Venice is still being banned because some censors see it as anti-Semitic. Shaw's Androcles and the Lion has been objected to because the author was thought to be an atheist. Robin Hood has been thrown out of schools as a Communist,[4] Plato as an advocate of free love. Edgar Rice Burrough's Tarzan books have been banned because Tarzan and Jane had never been married.[5] Controversy over books taught in schools has existed and exists now in all parts of the United States.

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[1] Howard K. Beale, Are American Teachers Free?: An Analysis of Restraints Upon the Freedom of Teaching in American Schools (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), pp. 312-313.

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[2] "Stranger in Town," Time, LXXVIII, (September 12, 1960), p. 79.

[3] Charles Morgan, "The Freedom to Read and Racial Problems," ALA Bulletin, LIX (June, 1965), p. 486.

[4] Paul Blanshard, The Right to Read: The Battle Against Censorship (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1955), p. 2. See also Jack Nelson and Gene Roberts, Jr., The Censors and the Schools (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1963), pp. 52-53.

[5] Lee A. Burress, How Censorship Affects the School, Special Bulletin No. 8, Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English (Stevens Point, Wis.: Wisconsin State College), p. 16. See also Archie McNeal, "Conference Background," ALA Bulletin, LIX (June, 1965), p. 420.

Thesis Objectives and Definitions

This thesis will examine ways in which censors view four novels. It will also examine how literary critics look at the same four novels, how the opinions of each group are alike and how they are different, and what each group implies about the function of literature in the schools.

In this thesis the term censor is broadly defined as a person who attempts to have certain books removed from the public school curriculum or library or who wishes to deny a teacher the right to teach or assign to his students certain books and materials. As we shall see later, censors can be isolated individuals, groups formed just for the occasion of protesting the use of a certain book; or racial, patriotic or sectarian groups. Teachers themselves very often refrain from using certain books because they fear what the consequences might be and prefer to ignore any controversial book. They might not do this consciously and they are not those who attack other teachers for using the book. They do, however, by their own actions, affect the use of controversial materials by imposing certain personal restrictions on themselves.

Censorship as defined here is not the restraint upon the mailing, selling, or publishing of books. It is, rather, the removal or the attempted removal of a book from the public schools. As we shall see later, certain kinds of public restraint on all classes of readers can influence what happens in the schools.

The term literary critic, like the term censor, is somewhat arbitrary. In fact, some individuals we shall discuss are both. In this thesis a literary critic is defined as an expert trained in the discipline of literature who in his criticism attempts to explain or to evaluate for his readers the work with which he is dealing.[6]

Although the two groups, censors and literary critics, are not mutually exclusive, and they do at times overlap, certain attitudes and approaches characterize particular members of each group. An obvious similarity between the members of both groups is that they have commented on, in some form or another, the four novels to be studied in this thesis. A differentiation of the attitudes and approaches of the censors and the critics will be an important concern of the chapters to follow.

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[6] In most cases cited in this thesis, the statements of censors have come from newspaper and periodical articles and from journals and reports published by groups and organizations. Some of these statements have been reprinted in casebooks and in liberal journals. Certain material on the censors, however, consists of reports from those who were censored. When possible, these reports have been verified by newspaper accounts. The writer's generalizations, therefore, concern only those censorship cases examined. There is no implication that the discussion is exhaustive nor definitive for other censorship cases. The cases are, however, in the writer's view, representative of the positions taken by censors and of the implications thereof.

Statements by critics were, of course, somewhat easier to collect than those by censors. For the most part, the critics examined were those who had published major works or appropriate articles on the novel in question. Generalizations about the critics, therefore, are made from a large and diverse collection of criticism.

The Controversial Novels to be Examined

Certain books are frequently at the center of censorship controversies, their titles reappearing time and time again in the school censorship discussions. Obviously it is not possible to discuss all controversial novels taught in the schools or all instances of censorship. The books to be studied in this thesis thus meet two criteria. First, they have been chosen because they are the books seemingly most often banned or which would-be censors most often try to ban. Secondly, they are books which literary critics and English teachers have thought of as worthwhile literature and which teachers have felt were worth defending.

Of the controversial novels which have been taught in secondary school and college English classes, The Catcher in the Rye by J. D. Salinger has probably given rise to the most controversy. A brief introductory discussion of the intensity of the controversy surrounding Catcher may be illustrative for the four novels to be discussed in the thesis. Controversies over J. D. Salinger's novel have raged in Maple Valley, Washington; Seattle, Washington; Armad, Michigan; Coral Gables, Florida; Beaufort, South Carolina; Hinckley, Maine; Cumberland, Wisconsin; Herkimer, New York; Edgerton, Wisconsin; Tulsa, Oklahoma; Louisville, Kentucky; Columbus, Ohio; Toronto, Ontario; Hamden, Connecticut; Temple City, California; and other places.[7]

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[7] Letter from Enid M. Olson, Director of Public Relations, The National Council of Teachers of English, Champaign, Illinois, to J.S.K., October 21, 1963.

Although most of the bannings or attempted bannings never reach the popular press, the American Library Association's Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom, the American Civil Liberties Union, Civil Liberties, the National Council of the Teachers of English Council-Grams, and the bulletins of other organizations, cite numerous and frequent references to school censorship of Catcher.

The report by Professor Lee A. Burress, Jr. on the censorship of texts in the State of Wisconsin, lists The Catcher in the Rye as the book objected to most often from 1961 to 1963. Burress cites 26 controversies over the book, ranging from denunciations of its language to the removal by a librarian because of the novel's reputation.[8] The March, 1966 edition of the Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom of the American Library Association reports on a study done by the NEA's Commission of Professional Rights and Responsibilities which cited The Catcher in the Rye as one of the books under strongest attack at the present time.[9]

Perhaps in some part because of the publicity Catcher has received both from literary critics and among adolescents themselves, it has become one of the most popular books among students. Early in 1961 Robert Gutwillig wrote in the New York Times Book Review Paperback Section that The Catcher in the Rye

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[8] Burress, p. 17.

[9] "Pressures Grow on Public Schools," Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom, XV (March, 1966), p. 1.

> has sold a total of 1,500,000 copies in the United States alone, 1,250,000 of them, significantly enough, in paperbound form. This year, for the second successive year, so many bookstores, especially those in college communities, reported it among their most wanted paperbacks that it has won a place on this Review's paperback bestseller list.
>
> Of the 250,000 paperback copies sold this year, a goodly number went to students of Yale, Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, and 275 other colleges and universities across the country who have adopted the book for required or supplementary reading in English, psychology and other courses. The appeal of The Catcher in the Rye extends also to the younger brothers and sisters of the college crowd. Thousands of secondary school students find themselves academically involved with Holden Caulfield and the week-end of his flight from Pency Prep.[10]

Numerous educators and literary critics have recommended the novel to high school and college readers. The novel's title appears on the selected book lists Books for You, of the National Council of Teachers of English; Reading Ladders for Human Relations, of the NCTE, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, and the American Council on Education; USAF Good Books; Recommended Cadet Reading (1960); the NCTE College and Adult Reading List of Books and Literature and the Fine Arts; and "Books Every College Bound Senior Should Read" of Literary Cavalcade Magazine. In his list "Selections from American Literature Since 1920" in his book English in in the Secondary School, Edwin H. Sauer says of Catcher,

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[10] Robert Gutwillig, "Everybody's Caught The Catcher in the Rye," The New York Times Book Review Paperback Section, January 15, 1961, p. 38.

> Some teachers may shy away from this, but it is a great favorite with the students already, especially the boys, and there is little question about its fundamental moral seriousness.[11]

Catcher, then, is not only widely read and recommended, it is also frequently banned.

In addition to Catcher in the Rye, three other novels serve as the basis for this study. They are The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain, The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck, and 1984 by George Orwell. Other literature banned in the schools will enter into the study, but these four novels will be the focal points because they have often been banned, and at the same time have often been defended, praised, and recommended by literary critics and teachers. Each of the novels contains some aspects which have aroused the ire of the censors. Some of the novels are more controversial than others, and one, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, as we shall see later, is controversial now for different reasons than it once was. The Grapes of Wrath also does not now cause the same kind of objections it once did.

Perhaps there are novels which, if taught in the schools, might cause more difficulty for the teacher than any of these. Perhaps there are novels which if taught in the schools and objected to, could be defended better than these. The four novels chosen, however, are four that are earning a place in modern fiction but which are having difficulty earning places in the public secondary school curriculum.

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[11] Edwin H. Sauer, English in the Secondary School (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961), p. 239.

Moreover, in the opinion of this writer, these four novels serve well as representative cases of the way censors and literary critics view controversial novels in the schools.

Before going on to discuss the novels, however, we shall briefly discuss who the censors are, how they operate, the legal background to the problem of censorship in general in the United States and in the schools in particular. This first chapter is an attempt to provide some context for viewing the censorship of novels in secondary schools.

Who the Censors Are and How They Operate

Two questions immediately come to mind. Who does the restraining and what right do they have to do so? The attacks upon books, particularly on those used by the English teacher, emanate from many directions. Censors, those who attack the books, can be ministers, representatives of patriotic organizations and pressure groups, teachers, educators, parents or even the students themselves. Often controversies germinate in the student's home when one or both of his parents discover that he is reading what might seem to them to be a dirty, an immoral, or an unpatriotic book. At times the views of these parents have been influenced by reports of bannings of the book in question in other parts of the country. The parents might be members of organizations which take an active part in reviewing and condemning certain books. Such reviewing by organizations is widespread. The groups, as we shall see, are not of any one particular political persuasion; liberal and left-wing groups, as well as moderate and right-wing groups have been involved in school censorship. Some of these groups are sectarian in their affiliation, some are racial groups and some are patriotic groups. Some have direct programs aimed at the schools, and others only affect the school tangentially.

For example, the Daughters of the American Revolution has, for the last few years, been circulating a review of textbooks, Textbook Study, which was completed in 1959. Although this report is concerned primarily with social studies textbooks, it does mention and deal with books which might be used in secondary school English classes. In reviewing over two hundred textbooks, the DAR explained that

> The general design and purpose of every textbook were weighed in the light of the excellent prior study made by the Sons of the American Revolution in 1949 entitled 'A Bill of Grievances,' to determine if our young students are emphatically taught love of God and Country or are being corrupted to accept socialism and materialism.[12]

Included on the list are books which are not patriotic enough, have too much "realistic literature" in them, and which emphasize discontent on the part of the young.[13] A list of disapproved authors includes the following names: Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Carl Van Doren, Norman Cousins, Carey

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[12] Daughters of the American Revolution, Textbook Study, quoted in Nelson and Roberts, p. 84.

[13] Ibid., p. 86.

McWilliams, Theodore H. White, Joseph Gaer, Langston Hughes, John Hersey, Lynd Ward, Howard Fast, and Richard Wright.[14]

Another, more active, organization concerned with the reviewing of textbooks is America's Future, located in New Rochelle, New York. It too is mainly concerned with exposing "one worldism," Communism, and subversion in social studies texts, but has included the categories English and literature in its Textbook Evaluation Reports. A representative evaluation may be pertinent here.

E. Merrill Root (who will be discussed later) in a review of Guide to Modern English by Richard K. Corbin and Porter G. Perrin, says their book is "relatively sound," but goes on to criticize the authors because

> ... they lug in a little story about a teacher who seemed to call John Hancock a "smuggler" in the wrong sense, and who was able to explain that she had done so in the right sense. The story is very good on the face of it, but it is used to criticize parents who objected to it "as untruthful and un-American." Of course it is too bad to misinterpret a teacher ("out of context"), but those of us who know the kind of stuff that does occur in texts and teaching of history know how seldom such an incident happens just in this way. But the story, as told, will naturally make all students suppose that all criticism of the "untruthful and un-American" will be as silly as this is. The bias of the authors (probably an unconscious fixation in "liberal" dogma) is clear.[15]

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[14] Ibid., pp. 87-88.

[15] E. Merrill Root, Textbook Evaluation Report on: "Guide to Modern English," prepared by the Textbook Evaluation Committee of America's Future, Inc., New Rochelle, New York, n.d., p. 2.

A pamphlet entitled What America's Future Inc. Does to Keep Free Enterprise and Constitutional Government Alive and Healthy for America, states the following goals for the Textbook Evaluation Committee:

> Investigations by various educators and others have shown that certain of the textbooks in popular use in our schools sharply criticize our free enterprise economy without giving credit for its accomplishments, distort our history, disparage our representative form of government, and impute base motives to those who framed our Constitution. Conversely, they create the impression that some form of state socialism or collectivism is more desirable.
>
> In 1958 there was not a single authoritative source in the United States to which school board members, parents, teachers, or other interested individuals could turn for professional, objective information on their schools.
>
> To fill this need America's Future formed a Textbook Evaluation Committee, made up of 16 of the nation's leading educators. The function of this committee is strictly informational. Its reviews evaluate each text as an instrument for teaching and disclose the degree to which each accurately portrays (or conveys misleading concepts of) our government and economic system. They do not tell school authorities which books they should use or which they should not.[16]

America's Future does not actively attempt to ban any books. Rather, its evaluations and reports are available free of charge to the public. Amongst members of the Textbook Evaluation Committee one finds at least two persons who are well known in the field of conservative politics. They are Russell Kirk, author of A Program for Conservatives and a Research Professor of Political Science at C. W. Post College of Long Island University and E. Merrill Root, author of *Collectivism on the Campus* and *Brainwashing in the High Schools* and Professor Emeritus of English Literature at Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana. In addition to the review quoted earlier and other reviews, Root is the author of a Special Report prepared by AF entitled *Great Literature Suitable for Use in Schools and Colleges*. Root berates the "fact" that our schools and colleges today "too often" teach books that "express the compulsive conformist taste and philosophy of the pseudo-modern." Root's report goes on to say the following:

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[16] What America's Future, Inc., Does to Keep Free Enterprise and Constitutional Government Alive and Healthy for America (New Rochelle, N. Y.: America's Future, Inc., n.d.), pp. 5-6.

> For schools and colleges to require reading in books that express only one obsessive narrow trend in literature -- the trend toward "naturalism" or "realism," toward "social criticism" and thinly disguised sociology, toward the anti-hero, the negative and destructive, the nihilistic, is to betray the essential function of education. Education should never conform to the fashions of the hour; it should discover, cherish, and uphold the rare works that express quality, value, and meaning -- works that are not fireflies and meteors, but fixed and abiding stars. Education should not intensify the aberrations of any time, but should conserve the qualities and values that are eternal.
>
> Therefore, to select and to present as required reading only the works of J. D. Salinger, Truman Capote, James Joyce, James Jones, Norman Mailer, James Baldwin (sometimes dealing with homosexuality), Henry Miller, Arthur Miller ("Death of a Salesman," etc.), Archibald MacLeish, Carl Sandburg, etc., and to concentrate on the worst of Hemingway and Faulkner, is partialism at best and fallacy at worst.[17]

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[17] E. Merrill Root, *Great Literature Suitable for Use in Schools and Colleges*, prepared by the Textbook Evaluation Committee of America's Future, Inc., New Rochelle, New York, n.d., p. 1.

Of course Root has many disclaimers built into his argument; he remains rational and tempers his thinking by qualifying his arguments with, "as required reading only the work... " He says that we should not teach too many of these books but who is to decide what is an acceptable number? Could, for example, a secondary school teacher assign both Catcher and Sandburg's Chicago? Root goes on to suggest literature which he would have taught, but it is equally possible that his followers will be struck not by Root's qualifiers, but will react to his list of objectionables.

E. Merrill Root's evaluation of social studies textbooks, Brain Washing in the High Schools, has gained wide recognition with patriotic organizations. Although he does not, in Brain Washing, examine any of the works of literature about which we are concerned, he does comment on the view of American literature expressed in the texts he is evaluating. He takes the books to task for emphasizing the views of life expressed by such authors as Theodore Dreiser, Sherwood Anderson, and Eugene O'Neill. Root condemns Todd and Curti for confining their examples (in their text) "to the literature of nihilism." He quotes a passage from the text which talks of the effect of technology upon Robinson Jeffers, T. S. Eliot, and E. A. Robinson. Root complains that Todd and Curti

> ... go on to mention F. Scott Fitzgerald, Theodore Dreiser, the earlier work of John Dos Passos, and John Steinbeck (but they cite by name only The Grapes of Wrath). There is, one

> may fairly say, a selectivity here that is partisan. All these writers tend to accentuate the negative...[18]

America's Future has been keeping a vigilant eye on the textbooks used in American public secondary schools for over seventeen years. Although such individuals as Root and such organizations as the D.A.R. and America's Future do not often act directly as censors in individual cases, they do, in this writer's opinion, promote and strengthen the environment in which censorship thrives. They exert pressures upon the schools which often do result in the censorship of certain texts because they are branded as "Un-American," not American enough, or anti-American.

Censorship may also emanate from religious or quasi-sectarian groups. The National Office for Decent Literature was established by the Catholic Bishops of the United States in 1938. It claims to be a non-sectarian co-ordinating committee whose purpose is "to set in motion the moral forces of the entire country . . . against the lascivious type of literature which threatens moral, social, and national life."[19] The NODL code states its case as follows:

> The National Office for Decent Literature has been established to safeguard the moral and spiritual ideals of youth through a program designed:

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[18] E. Merrill Root, Brainwashing in the High Schools (New York: The Devin-Adair Company, 1962), p. 173.

[19] What is NODL? (Chicago: National Office for Decent Literature, n.d.), p. 1. See also Harold C. Gardiner, Catholic Viewpoint on Censorship (New York: Image Books, 1961).

> 1. To remove objectionable comic books, magazines, and pocket-size books from places of distribution accessible to youth;
> 2. To encourage the publication of good literature;
> 3. To promote plans to develop worthwhile reading habits during youth's formative years.
>
> NODL fulfills its purpose, in part, by offering to responsible individuals and organizations evaluations of current comic books, magazines, and pocket-size books based on clearly defined, objective standards.[20]

Although NODL does not concern itself directly with books which are used in the schools, and does in fact, limit itself to the review of paperback books, the lists which it publishes are quite frequently brandished by censors and would-be censors. The NODL code goes on to state its criteria for evaluation:

> Publications are listed as objectionable for youth which:
> 1. Glorify crime or the criminal;
> 2. Describe in detail ways to commit criminal acts;
> 3. Hold lawful authority in disrespect;
> 4. Exploit horror, cruelty, or violence;
> 5. Portray sex facts offensively;
> 6. Feature indecent, lewd, or suggestive photographs or illustrations;
> 7. Carry advertising which is offensive in content or advertising products which may lead to physical or moral harm;
> 8. Use blasphemous, profane, or obscene speech indiscriminately and repeatedly;
> 9. Hold up to ridicule any national, religious, or racial group.[21]

In their purpose of protecting the ideals and morality of youth, the reviewers have blacklisted some of the books in which we are interested. And their lists have been used in attempts to remove certain books from the schools. In reply to a letter questioning NODL about its activities concerning the books of interest in this study, Mrs. Gertrude Castagner, Secretary of NODL, answered:

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[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid., p. 4.

> We have not had the Review Board read Huck Finn by Mark Twain or 1984 by George Orwell. Grapes of Wrath was considered to be objectionable. Huxley's Brave New World and Salinger's Catcher in the Rye were rated "borderline" which means that they were not sufficiently in violation of the Code to warrant listing.[22]

The NODL Newsletter in the Winter of 1966 carries a lead article entitled "In Case a Body asks a Body about Catcher in the Rye." NODL states in this article that Catcher has provoked more letters to them than has any other book and that although their original review voted the book "Objectionable for Youth," a later review resulted in a 'hung jury.' As a result, the title was removed from the "Objectionable" list and relisted as 'borderline.'[23]

NODL responded to a parent who asked if it is right for her daughter, a junior in high school, to be required to read Catcher with the following statement:

> NODL dislikes to hedge, but sometimes it is necessary. In answering the mother of the high school junior, we can only say that it is probably best that your daughter is reading the book under

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[22] Mrs. Gertrude Castagner, Secretary, NODL, letter to J.S.K., May 12, 1966.

[23] "In Case a Body Asks a Body 'Bout Catcher in the Rye," NODL Newsletter, Winter, 1966, pp. 1-2.

> competent supervision. Holden Caulfield can be an irresponsible, foul-mouthed rebel -- a potential menace to society. Or he can be tragically misunderstood, unwanted product of a broken home, just waiting for a little guidance and lots of tender loving care -- a species of our own jet set, a symptom of our ulcer age.
>
> We wish Marilyn could wait a year or two to read the story. High school girls shouldn't be subject to a profusion of "goddams" and it would be wonderful if they could be protected from the four-letter expressions which "Catcher" uses once or twice.[24]

NODL recognized different interpretations of Holden as well as the difficulty of protecting the adolescent from certain knowledge.

> Whether or not it is required of her, your daughter is likely to pick up Catcher in the Rye anyway. If her hearing is normal, she probably hears Holden's language repeated every day in her life. It is better that she reads the book under the direction of a competent instructor who can interpret the boy's actions and language as the outward expression of a deeply disturbed and complex personality. To make sure that the girl sees the book from a proper perspective, you would do well to read the book yourself so that you can discuss it objectively and maturely.[25]

NODL, in deciding that the book can be interpreted in different ways and that it might best be taught in school "under the direction of a competent instructor," seems, to this writer, to be offering quite sound advice to the parent. It also seems, however, that such a decision on the part of NODL is more the exception than the rule and that one of the reasons NODL might have taken this stance is that they realized the possibility that the adolescent "is likely to pick up Catcher in the Rye anyway."

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[24] Ibid., p. 2.

[25] Ibid.

Most of the pressure exerted by NODL itself is upon book and magazine store owners. Within the context of this study, however, the problem is that would-be censors often do use NODL lists to support their attacks on books in the schools. There is also a very strong likelihood that NODL lists have also at times precipitated some attacks. The atmosphere and the climate for censorship gain strength and encouragement, in this writer's opinion, when organizations such as NODL play as active a role as they do in trying to "safeguard the moral and spiritual ideals of youth," NODL's disclaimer notwithstanding.

> Any responsible group which of its own volition and choosing decides to use the NODL list in its campaign, has NODL's permission to do so. NODL indicates, however, that the list is merely an expression of a publication's nonconformity with the NODL Code, and states categorically that the list is not to be used for purposes of legal action, boycott or coercion.[26]

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[26] What is NODL? (Chicago: National Office for Decent Literature, n.d.), p. 8.

An American Civil Liberties Union policy statement in 1951 warned that "a fundamental objection to these extended activities of the NODL is that the judgment of a particular group is being imposed on the freedom of choice of the whole community. The novel which may be thought by a committee of Catholic mothers to be unsuitable for a Roman Catholic adolescent is thus made unavailable to the non-Catholic. It is plainly necessary to challenge the NODL as keeper by self-election, of the conscience of the whole country." (ACLU statement, quoted in Gardiner, p. 184.)

In America magazine, NODL attempted to answer charges brought upon them by the ACLU. In part this statement says that NODL has never reviewed a cloth-bound book, that it is interested in the widespread availability of objectionable

Citizens for Decent Literature, whose headquarters is located in Cincinnati, Ohio, also dedicates itself to the search for offensive materials. Like NODL, it is mainly concerned with "filth on the newsstands." It publishes a biweekly newsletter, The National Decency Reporter which gives advice on legal aspects of removing "smut" from the newsstands and ways of forming citizens' groups in individual communities. Charles H. Keating, chairman of CDL, is a lawyer and has been most verbal in his opinions concerning the effect of reading on juvenile delinquency, including a statement before a Senate Committee investigating juvenile delinquency. In a pamphlet distributed by CDL, Keating warns:

> The question is the survival of Judeo-Christian civilization. If the decent citizens of this nation continue lethargic and apathetic in the face of this pernicious enemy, the families of Western Civilization will live under the anarchy of the libertine, and "the plum soon thereafter will become ripe for plucking" by the Communists.

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materials to youths at a nominal cost NODL further states that although the majority of the reviewers are Catholic, at times they had a Protestant and a Jewish reviewer. Although NODL is concerned with the distribution and not the teaching of books, it does affect school censorship by trying to regulate the "public morality," which, NODL asserts, "can be seriously damaged by the continuous reading of objectionable literature. Such reading has the power to destroy democratic ideas and ideals in young people who may never be judged delinquents but who will be the future citizens and public officials of our country." (Msgr. Thomas J. Fitzgerald, "NODL States its Case," America, XCVII (June 1, 1957), pp. 280-282. Reprinted in pamphlet form by NODL).

> Either of these masters we so beget is the destroyer of freedom and the personification of evil.[27]

Keating goes on to explain the rationale and function of the CDL.

> Citizens for Decent Literature, Inc., nationally known as CDL,... has as its avowed purpose the eradication of obscenity and pornography in the marketplace. The Cincinnati headquarters acts as a mother unit for some 300 community branches throughout the United States, accumulating and disseminating information, providing speakers, organizers, and 16 mm., sound, motion picture films to requesting fraternal, civic, or religious organizations. CDL pursues a two-phased course in its fight. First it works to educate and thus create an awakened and knowledgeable public. Secondly, it aids and abets law enforcement against the background of an enlightened and activist public opinion.[28]

Although the thrust of the CDL is legal, it too affects school censorship. It does so by adding to the environment of restraint and in the banning of books (e.g. the removal of smut from newsstands). CDL's increased drives for local chapters and its training programs for policemen as well as laymen to help in the search for the obscene also contribute to an environment of restraint.

But one should not think that the only groups actively concerned with reviewing textbooks and with protecting "the morals of our youth" are politically right wing or superpatriotic groups. Other sectarian groups, for example the

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[27] Charles H. Keating, Jr., "Poison in Print," reprinted from The Exchangite (January, 1964), p. 2.

[28] Ibid.

Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai Brith and minority or racial groups such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People scrutinize carefully the treatment of minorities in textbooks. As we shall see later, representatives of these organizations have been instrumental in the removal from the schools of such books as *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Oliver Twist*. (See Chapter IV.) The Anti-Defamation League periodically publishes its review of secondary school textbooks, *The Treatment of Minorities*. ADL states that

> The current report is based on findings from 48 leading American junior and senior high school textbooks in the area of social studies. All 48 were analyzed for their presentations on the topics of Jews and Nazi persecutions of minorities, respectively. Twenty-four were selected in order to study portrayal of American Negroes and treatment of American immigrants and migrant groups. We have tried to illustrate the range of quality in textual treatment of these four areas by presenting relevant excerpts from the texts themselves.
>
> Although there has been marked, but very uneven improvement in intergroup relations content since 1949, only a few books within each subject-area category (i.e., American history, world history, problems of American democracy) give a realistic and constructive portrayal of certain minority groups. No one book gives an adequate presentation of all four topics covered by this report.
>
> A majority of the texts still present a largely white, Protestant, Anglo-Saxon view of history and of the current social scene. The nature and problems of minority groups in America are still very largely neglected.[29]

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[29] Lloys Marcus, *The Treatment of Minorities in Secondary School Textbooks* (New York: Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 1961), p. 59.

Numerous groups, societies, and organizations such as the ADL and the NAACP watch what is being taught in the schools and scrutinize texts searching for things which may offend them. As reasonable as the ADL's reviewing seems, this group, like the others, does exert pressures upon the schools.

The Legal Background of Censorship

Now that we have begun to see the social climate of censorship, let us briefly examine the legal background of censorship. There are two legal questions involved here. First, there is the issue of the importing, mailing, distributing, selling, and printing of "objectionable" printed materials. Controversies here have produced the major censorship cases (e.g. Ulysses) decided by the courts. Secondly, there is the restraint imposed by individuals or organizations on certain material which is distributed, taught, or recommended by the public schools. The first problem is fraught with complexities with which we need not concern ourselves in detail. But there are three points which have evolved from the legal history of censorship in the United States which are extremely relevant to this study. These are the concepts of "l'homme moyen sensuel," community standards, and the dominant theme of the material.

Early legal opinions both in this country and in Great Britain approached problems of censorship from the standpoint of the protection of youth from materials which would "deprave and corrupt" them. These words -- "deprave and corrupt" -- come from the English legal decision (Regina v. Hicklin) upon which we base our standard of judging what is "obscene," and, therefore, unfit for public consumption. The American precedent, set in 1896 by the United States Supreme Court, deciding that the publication Broadway must be banned, was based on the famous British Hicklin decision. In the Hicklin decision Lord Chief Justice Cockburn had overruled Judge Hicklin by deciding that "The Confessional Unmasked, Showing the Depravity of the Romish Priesthood; the Iniquity of the Confessional, and the Questions Put to Females in Confession," was obscene. Cockburn said,

> I think the test of obscenity is this, whether the tendency of the matter charged as obscenity is to deprave and corrupt those whose minds are open to such immoral influences and into whose hands a publication of this sort may fall.[30]

In the United States the limiting of materials to the standard of the youngest or most susceptible was legally formulated in 1924 in New York. Judge Robert F. Wagner, in his opinion on the book Casanova's Homecoming by Arthur Schnitzler, responded to the state statute on obscenity,

> The important but not sole test, as taken from the case of REGINA v. HICKLIN, is one that I think should in part guide the law-enforcement authority

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[30] Lord Chief Justice Cockburn (Regina v. Hicklin), quoted in Morris L. Ernst and Alan U. Schwartz, Censorship: The Search for the Obscene (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964), p.35. Note: Many of the legal opinions quoted here are taken from Ernst and Schwartz who have, in their book, "attempted to delete esoteric legalisms." (p. vii).

> and a court and jury in determining whether a book offends the law against obscene publications, namely: "Is the tendency of the matter charged as obscene to deprave or corrupt those whose minds are open to such immoral influences and who might come in contact with it?" keeping in full view the consideration that the law looks to the protection not of the mature and intelligent, with minds strengthened to withstand the influences of the prohibited data, but of the young and immature, the ignorant and sensually inclined.[31]

Wagner set the precedent for many cases which subsequently appeared in the courts. Parts of the remainder of his decision read much like the literature of NODL and CDL. In favor of protecting the "innocent" from obscene literature, Judge Wagner went on to say:

> ...The future of a nation depends upon its youth. Our more enlightened conception of the need of protective measures to preserve our youth is reflected in the great progress that has taken place in recent years in the enactment of laws for the protection of the health of our women and children to save them from exploitation by the unscrupulous employer, and even sometimes, though rarely, the unscrupulous parent, in order that the child may become a healthy and useful citizen and the woman preserved for motherhood. We have the compulsory education laws; we have the laws prohibiting child labor, and when children are permitted by law to work we limit their hours of employment; we have the laws limiting the hours women may toil, and others prohibiting them from working in factories during the night time; we have laws insuring proper sanitary conditions under which they may be employed, the Widows' Pension Law and many others, here unnecessary to enumerate, of the same purport.
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> And while their enactment was actuated largely by our enlightened conceptions of social justice and motives altruistic, yet these laws also exist because the fostering of the health of women and children is one of grave governmental concern. Just as it is of

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[31] Judge Robert F. Wagner (People v. Seltzer New York, 1922), quoted in Ernst and Schwartz, p. 67.

> national concern and interest to protect their health, it is equally important to protect our youth against the corruption of their morals, so that we may do everything within governmental power to afford them physical, mental and moral virility and not have their development arrested in these respects during the formative period. It is a national duty to prevent the moral or physical weakening of the family -- "The Nursery of Mankind." History warns us that in the wake of a moral deterioration comes physical deterioration and national destruction. Hence our interest in the strict enforcement of all laws to prevent the publication and distribution of corrupt literature.[32]

The assumption that children should be protected, that they can be morally and even physically harmed by reading, can limit the mature adult to only that which might be suitable for children by making anything else unavailable. As we have seen, this is,in some respects, what NODL, NAACP, and CDL are presently doing, although they claim not to be. Partisan groups, in this writer's opinion, can impose their own standards upon whole communities and have done so.

By the same token, the parent who insists that a certain book be banned from the schools is acting differently from a group which attempts to prevent a book's entry into the country or its sale or mailing. Moreover, as we will discuss later, there is a great difference between the parent who insists that his child be excused from reading a certain book and that parent who attempts to have the book in question removed from the curriculum completely. Legal and extra-legal restrictions can keep "dangerous" materials out of the reach of everyone when censors see some people as being particularly susceptible to the material.

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[32] _Ibid._, pp. 68-69.

Judge John M. Woolsey, in the famous 1933 Ulysses case, carried the legal interpretation of censorship somewhat further by stating that the threshold of effect the book might have should be raised from that of children to that of the average man.

> Whether a particular book would tend to excite such [sexual] impulses and thoughts must be tested by the Court's opinion as to its effect on a person with average sex instincts -- what the French would call l'homme moyen sensuel -- who plays, in this branch of legal inquiry, the same role of hypothetical reagent as does the "reasonable man" in the law of torts and "the man learned in the art" on questions of invention in patent law.[33]

Although Woolsey's opinion was meant to have books judged not by their effect on children or the abnormal, but by their effect on the "average man," this raises the problem of who, exactly, is the "average man." Is the average person a literati as some have accused Woolsey of thinking, or is the average person a high school senior? The development of different laws for different groups has been used to deal with this problem in at least some way.

The difficulty has been, however, in keeping the laws separated. Too often those laws meant to apply to the reading matter available to youth have been applied to restrict the reading matter of adults. This did, in fact, cause comment by the United States Supreme Court when it unanimously reversed the lower court's conviction of a bookseller for selling an obscene book. Mr. Justice Frankfurter's opinion does, in part, continue the progress away from limiting adults to reading material that is suitable for children.

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[33] Judge John M. Woolsey (United States v. One Book called 'Ulysses', 1933), quoted in Ernst and Schwartz, p. 99.

> It is clear on the record that Butler was convicted because Michigan made it an offense for him to make available for the general reading public (and he in fact sold to a police officer) a book that the trial judge found to have a potentially deleterious influence upon youth. The State insists that, by thus quarantining the general reading public against books not too rugged for grown men and women in order to shield juvenile innocence, it is exercising its power to promote the general welfare....
>
> We have before us legislation not reasonably restricted to the evil with which it is said to deal. The incidence of this enactment is to reduce the adult reading population of Michigan to reading only what is fit for children. It thereby arbitrarily curtails one of those liberties of the individual, now enshrined in the Fourteenth Amendment, that history has attested as the indispensable conditions for the maintenance and progress of a free society. We are constrained to reverse this decision.[34]

Because of this difficulty of defining exactly who is the average man, "l'homme moyen sensuel," the legal framework has been shifting, case after case, away from the standards of a single individual towards the application of what is usually called community standards. This, of course, solves none of the actual problems of the effect of "obscene" literature upon the individual, be he high school student or president of a university, but it does succeed in by-passing the question. Legally, particularly in cases of seizure and prior restraint, the concept of community standards perhaps adds as many complications as it solves. It does recognize, however, that tastes and what may be deemed objectionable in Topeka, Kansas might be different from tastes and objectionability in New York City.

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[34] Justice Felix Frankfurter (Butler v. Michigan, 1957); quoted in Ernst and Schwartz, p. 194.

There is no need for us to dwell on all of the complications involved with the growth of this concept of community standards. However, Justice Douglas, dissenting, speaking also for Justices Black and Brennan in the famous Kingsley case before the Supreme Court in 1957 recognized the need to consider to whom the publication is sold and under what circumstances:

> The judge or jury which finds the publisher guilty in New York City acts on evidence that may be quite different from evidence before the judge or jury that finds the publisher not guilty in Rochester. In New York City the publisher may have been selling his tracts to juveniles, while in Rochester he may have sold to professional people. The nature of the group among whom the tracts are distributed may have an important bearing on the issue of guilt in any obscenity prosecution. Yet the present law makes one criminal conviction conclusive throughout the state. I think every publication is a separate offense which entitles the accused to a separate trial. Juries or judges may differ in their opinions, community by community, case by case. The publisher is entitled to that leeway under our constitutional system. One is entitled to defend every utterance on its merits and not to suffer today for what he uttered yesterday. Free speech is not to be regulated like diseased cattle and impure butter. The audience (in this case the judge or the jury) that hissed yesterday

> may applaud today, even for the same performance.[35]

The feeling on the part of civil libertarians that lists composed by veteran, patriotic, religious and other groups should not determine what can and can not be taught in the schools is analogous to the feeling of Justice Douglas here. The classic example in textbook publishing is that of Southern buyers who dictate against pictures in texts depicting integration so that the publisher, rather than lose a customer, will either have to print two separate versions of the book or comply. Pressure groups who feel that the U.N. is left-wing have caused publishers to remove positive references to it by declining to adopt the text unless the references were deleted. A special "school" edition of Huckleberry Finn was published which used the word "negro" rather than "nigger" in the novel. (A discussion of this follows, in Chapter II.)

What may offend in one community, then, need not offend in another. What offended in the mid-nineteenth century need not offend in the mid-twentieth. Again, the complications of the legal question in defining community standards have never been solved. Both the concept of "l'homme moyen sensuel" and the concept of community standards, however complicated they may be and however frequently the courts use them to avoid any direct interpretation, have contributed towards a more relative outlook on censorship on the part of the courts.

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[35] Justice William Douglas (Kingsley Books v. Brown, 1957); quoted in Ernst and Schwartz, pp. 180-181.

A third legal concept also is important for our discussion of censorship in the schools. This concept has two parts -- that of considering the book in question as a whole and taking into question any literary merit that it might have.[36]

There is a tendency among censors and would-be censors to attack specific words or passages of a piece of literature and to base their attacks on these isolated passages. Often the word or words objected to are quoted or are referred to out of context. As we will see, often the censor does not read the complete book in question. A statement attributed to Thomas Bowdler, the early 19th century English censor of Shakespeare epitomizes the fear of seeing certain words in print.

> If any word or expression is of such a nature that the first impression it excites is an impression of obscenity, that word ought not to be spoken nor written or printed; and if printed, it ought to be erased.[37]

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[36] An important idea linked with literary merit is the redeeming social value of the book. However, there are no "experts" to comment on the social value of a book, comparable to those who are accepted as experts of its literary merit. Moreover, as Ernst and Schwartz point out, "...there are few guidelines to define social purpose." (p. 246). The Roth case (see below) stated that a work must be allowed unless it is utterly devoid of social importance. The reader of this thesis can see the difficulties the courts encounter here.

[37] Thomas Bowdler, quoted in Richard Hanser, "Shakespeare, Sex... and Dr. Bowdler," The Saturday Review, XXXVIII (April 23, 1955), p. 50.

One of the earliest decisions by a court which took into consideration a book as a whole and the theme of the book was the appellate decision in the 1929 case against Donald Friede, the publisher of Radclyffe Hall's The Well of Loneliness. The original decision conceded that the novel was praised by literary critics and that it contained nothing in particular which could be pointed to as being obscene. But the judge considered the book as a whole and banned it because he felt that the theme of idealized lesbian love was in itself objectionable. Judge Hyman Busnel's decision for the Magistrate's Court of New York City was, however, reversed by a three judge appellate court.[38] Three years later the New York Court of Appeals, in deciding that Theophile Gautier's novel Mademoiselle de Maupin was not to be banned, explicitly dealt with the role of the critics and the necessity of viewing the book as a whole.

> Theophile Gautier is conceded to be among the greatest French writers of the nineteenth century. When some of his earlier works were submitted to Sainte-Beuve, that distinguished critic was astonished by the variety and richness of his expression. Henry James refers to him as a man of genius (North American Review, April, 1873). Arthur Symons (Studies in Prose and Verse), George Saintsbury (A Short History of French Literature), James Breck Perkins (Atlantic Monthly, March, 1887) all speak of him with admiration.... This was the man who in 1836 published "Mademoiselle de Maupin." It is a book of over four hundred pages. The moment it was issued it excited the criticism

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[38] People v. Friede, New York City 1929); quoted in Ernst and Schwartz, p. 74.

> of many, but not all of the great Frenchmen of the day. It has since become a part of French literature. No review of French writers of the last one hundred years fails to comment upon it. With the author's felicitous style, it contains passages of purity and beauty. It seems to be largely a protest against what the author, we believe mistakenly, regards as the prudery of newspaper criticism. It contains many paragraphs, however, which taken by themselves are undoubtedly vulgar and indecent.
>
> No work may be judged from a selection of such paragraphs alone. Printed by themselves they might, as a matter of law, come within the prohibitions of the statute. So might a similar selection from Aristophanes or Chaucer or Boccaccio or even from the Bible. The book, however, must be considered broadly as a whole.[39]

Judge Andrews, who wrote this opinion, goes on to cite additional literary criticism of the novel and its author. Since that time numerous cases have relied on the concepts of the book as a whole and the judgments of literary critics. Most of the trials of Ulysses, Lady Chatterley's Lover and Fanny Hill have taken into consideration the book as a work of art, as a whole entity, as well as the judgments of expert witnesses both for and against the books. These considerations, as well as the considerations of the dominant effect of the book and whether it will offend not the most susceptible, but "l'homme moyen sensuel" or contemporary community standards are now a part of the legal framework and its attempt at a definition of what can be banned on the grounds of obscenity.

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[39] (Raymond D. Halsey v. The New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, New York, 1922), quoted in Ernst, pp. 55-59.

The Supreme Court case of Roth v. United States in 1957 brought together concepts with which we are dealing. The court affirmed the conviction of Samuel Roth by a New York Federal Court for violating postal laws by sending obscenity through the mail. Justice Brennan's opinion newly defined, in full, the concept of obscenity.

> Obscene material is material which deals with sex in a manner appealing to prurient interests and the test of obscenity is whether to the average person, applying contemporary community standards, the dominant theme of the material appeals to prurient interest.[40]

The court recognized the difficulties of the terms it was using as well as the uncertainty of proof of how reading can arouse prurient interest. Justice Douglas, in his dissenting opinion, deals with the effect of reading upon anti-social behavior. (See Appendix A.)

> If we were certain that impurity of sexual thoughts impelled to action, we would be on less dangerous ground in punishing the distributors of this sex literature. But it is by no means clear that obscene literature, as so defined, is a significant factor in influencing substantial deviations from community standards.[41]

The elusiveness of causal evidence and the difficulty of definitions has prevailed not only throughout the legal gropings with the problem, but, as we shall see, in all aspects of censorship.

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[40] Justice William Brennan (Roth v. United States, 1957), quoted in Ernst and Schwartz, p. 207.

[41] Justice William Douglas, ibid., p. 215.

The legal background of censorship in general is more complex and problematic than is possible to represent in this brief discussion. Hopefully, however, this discussion has given some background of important concepts in the development of American legal opinion regarding censorship in general. Basically, the writer has tried to point out a trend (which need not necessarily continue) away from thinking of the reader as an innocent likely to be depraved by certain literature, to thinking of the reader as the average man, to thinking of communities of readers and the different standards that apply in different communities at different times. At the same time, legal opinions have in many cases, at least, come to regard books as complete works of art, to see "objectionable" parts of them in context, and to consider the intent of the author and the dominant effect of the book as well as the opinions of what we have been referring to as professional literary critics.

The Legal Background and the Schools

Using the context of our discussion of the legal climate of censorship in general, we will go on to examine more specifically, some of the trends that seem of importance in one of the very few cases of censorship in schools which has appeared before the courts. Before ever reaching the courts, most cases of school censorship are disposed of in one way or another. Teachers who have been threatened with dismissal for teaching a book seldom have withstood censors to the point of bringing cases into court themselves; censors have seldom used the recourse of the court since extra-legal pressures alone have so often been sufficient. But when cases do come before the courts, the problem is the rights of the public in determining what shall and what shall not be taught in the schools. Another problem is the rights the schools have over their students when the desires of the school and those of the parents are in conflict. When a parent or other interested party objects to the use of certain materials in the schools, the law has quite often determined that the school, acting as an expert, has the right to determine the curriculum. This is especially true when the censor insists not only that his child or any individual child be excused from participating in the part of the curriculum in question, but that the curriculum be changed for all. In his book Schools and the Law, E. Edmund Reutter effectively summarizes and analyses the problem.

> Occasionally a parent or a taxpayer objects to some material used for instructional purposes in the schools. When local authorities permit the use, legal recourse may be had to the courts on allegation that the discretion of the local board of education has been abused or that constitutional rights are being infringed by the teaching. In most instances, the issue can be resolved by permitting the children of the aggrieved parent not to participate in the instruction which is offensive. In order for a court to require the removal of a publication completely from the curriculum, it would have to be shown that the volume actually did teach doctrines of a sectarian nature or doctrines subversive to the government, would

> offend the morals of the community or was intended to promote bigoted and intolerant hatred against a particular group.[42]

When, however, a parent is not satisfied with having his child excused from reading or studying the material in question and he brings a case to court, then it is up to the court to decide, as the court decides generally in censorship cases, whether or not the material is objectionable. The problem here, though, is not whether the material can legally be mailed, sold, or distributed, but is it appropriate for the student to read in school. Few cases of this sort have ever reached the corts, but we will look at one which is particularly relevant to our topic.

In 1949 several Jewish organizations protested to the New York City Board of Education about Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist and William Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice being used as approved texts in the city's public secondary schools. These groups claimed that the books "portrayed Jewish characters in uncomplimentary light.... "[43] They went on to charge that "the two books are objectionable because they tend to engender hatred of the Jew as a person and as a race."[44]

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[42] E. Edmund Reutter, Jr., Schools and the Law (Dobbs Ferry, N. Y.: Oceana Press, 1964), p. 47.

[43] Rosenberg v. Board of Education, 196 Misc. 542, 92 N.Y. Supp. 2d 344-46 (1949).

[44] Ibid.

In dismissing the suit, brought by Murray B. Rosenberg against the Board of Education of the City of New York, the court said, in part, the following:

> Except where a book has been maliciously written for the apparent purpose of promoting and fomenting a bigoted and intolerant hatred against a particular racial or religious group, public interest in a free and democratic society does not warrant or encourage the suppression of any book at the whim of any unduly sensitive person or group of persons, merely because a character described in such a book as belonging to a particular race or religion is portrayed in a derogatory or offensive manner. The necessity for the suppression of such a book must clearly depend upon the intent and motive which has actuated the author in making such a portrayal.[45]

Using the frame of reference of the motives of the authors, the court refused to consider isolated passages and particular words used in the books, but, instead, chose to view the books as whole pieces of art, considering their dominant themes. The court was well aware of the possible effect numerous pressure groups could have in their partisan objections to materials used in the schools. The court went on to say that the

> literary value of a work of fiction does not depend upon the religious or national origin of the characters portrayed therein. If evaluation of any literary work is permitted to be based upon a requirement that each book be free from derogatory reference to any religion, race, country, nation or personality; endless litigation respecting many books would probably ensue, dependent upon sensibilities and views of the person suing.

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[45] Ibid.

> Public education and instruction in the home will remove religious and racial intolerance more effectively than censorship and suppression of literary works which have been accepted as works of art and which are not per se propaganda against or for any race, religion or group. Removal from the schools of these books will contribute nothing toward the diminution of anti-religious feeling; as a matter of fact, removal may lead to misguided reading and unwarranted inferences by the unguided pupil.
>
> Educational institutions are concerned with the development of free inquiry and learning. The administrative officers must be free to guide teachers and pupils toward that goal. Their discretion must not be interfered with in the absence of proof of actual malevolent intent. Interference by the court will result in suppression of the intended purpose of aiding those seeking education.[46]

The court, at least in this case, has judged the book as a text used in New York City's public secondary schools in much the same way as the courts have been looking at other pieces of "questionable" literature. In doing so they considered that the books would be taught under the jurisdiction of a teacher and added their belief that as such, they would be less likely to promote bigotry and intolerance than if they were banned from the schools and read by the students surreptitiously. The court seemed to view the book in reference to the capabilities and fallibilities of the average student and not the one most susceptible to whatever possible effects reading this book might have. The court considered the community in which the book would be read, as well as the total book as a work of art.

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[46] Ibid.

Summary of Rationale

This thesis attempts to examine the ways in which censors and would-be censors approach the four often-attacked novels which were mentioned earlier. It deals with the ways censors look at these books and the ways literary critics see the same books, and with the implications for the teaching of these books behind the statements of both censors and critics. It approaches the problem not book by book, not case by case, not critic by critic. Instead, it approaches the problem from what seems to be its most viable source, the issues raised by the censors themselves.

One finds that the issues which censors raise in response to these books can be grouped into three separate categories. Although there is some overlap between these categories, almost all of the objections of the censors fall into at least one of them. The censors, we find, object to the language of the novels, the characters of the novels, or the attitudes (or what the censors see as the attitudes) of the authors. In discussing the censorship of these novels, then, we shall examine these three categories of objections by analyzing the views of the censors, the views of professional critics, and then comparing and contrasting the implications behind these views.

CHAPTER II

THE LANGUAGE OF THE NOVELS: CENSORS' AND CRITICS' VIEWPOINTS

In the beginning of many censorship cases is the objectionable word, for it is a tangible, obvious fault which the censor can isolate and recognize easily. "Offensive" words will leap out at the reader with merely a flip of the pages from some of the books with which we are dealing. Other "offensive" words can be detected when the reader lets his eyes wander down the page, while some offending words take a little more scrutiny to find. As we shall see, the mere presence of certain words is enough, in some cases, to call for the banishment of the book.

In this chapter we shall examine the language censors attack in _The Catcher in the Rye_, _The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn_, and _The Grapes of Wrath_ and why they attack it. (Some discussion of the language of _1984_ is also included.) After discussing the censors' objections to the language of each novel, we shall compare and contrast implications behind the censors' statements with implications behind the statements of literary critics who have also commented on the language of these novels. This will, hopefully, help us to see how the censors view the language of these books and how the critics agree and disagree with them. Throughout the thesis the four novels will be discussed in the same order, beginning with the most controversial novel and continuing with the novels in an order which seems, in this writer's judgment, to correspond to the frequency and vehemence of attacks upon them.

"The Catcher in the Rye":Obscenity, Profanity, Blasphemy, and Faulty Grammar

Of the novels we are studying, J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* undoubtedly contains the most controversial language. In a study of censorship in the state of Wisconsin, Lee A. Burress reports 26 cases involving the novel, most of which included such objections as "dirty words, writing, or talk," "profanity and sex reference," "language," and "filthy language."[1] A more recent study of the censorship experiences of selected members of the National Council of Teachers of English lists 25 controversies over the novel, with the objections including vulgarity and unsuitable language.[2]

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[1] Lee A. Burress, "How Censorship Affects the School," Special Bulletin No. 8, Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English (Stevens Point, Wis.: Wisconsin State College, 1963), p. 17.

[2] Nyla Herber Ahrens, *Censorship and the Teacher of English: A Questionnaire Survey of a Selected Sample of Secondary School Teachers of English*, Ed. D. Thesis, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1965, p. 124.

Attacks on Catcher seldom fail to mention the language of the book.

In April of 1960 parents in Tulsa, Oklahoma complained because Mrs. Beatrice Levin, an Edison High School English teacher, had assigned The Catcher in the Rye to her junior class students. "One four letter word in particular," parents protested, made the book unfit to read. An irate parent publicly announced that he did not want his daughter to read such "dirty words, filth, and smut." The superintendent of schools reportedly read one page and promptly declared that the book should be removed from the high school reading list.[3]

In Louisville, Kentucky Donald M. Fiene's teaching of the novel to Male High School sophomores led to an uproar in January of 1960. The principal of the school, W. S. Milburn, reacted by joining sides with the censors, the first of whom, reportedly, were Fiene's students. After examining the book, Milburn declared that the only purpose he could see for Salinger's having used "such language" was to shock the reader.[4] A group of Male High School teachers immediately rallied to the support of Milburn and the censors. Among them was Mary Hodge Cox, an English teacher, who said in the

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[3] Beatrice Levin, "J. D. Salinger in Oklahoma," Chicago Jewish Forum, XLX (Spring, 1961), p. 231.

[4] Donald M. Fiene, The Controversy, unpublished manuscript in my possession (Louisville, 1961), p. 26; partially reprinted in The Realist, I (December, 1961).

Courier-Journal that she had not read all of the book, "And I wouldn't read it all. I'd be ashamed to read it aloud to my husband."[5] The dean of girls at the high school also commented on the book: "There's too much profanity and it's too crude. It's a waste of time to read it."[6]

Teacher Fiene, in his reports of the controversy, asserts,

> It has been my experience that really only one word has been responsible for the removal of Catcher from so many libraries. . . the future success of Catcher in the school systems will always be dependent, in individual cases, on whether or not the administrator or department head who gets stuck with the final decision is the type of man who can read "Fuck" in a book without losing control of his reason. (Or who won't say as one said to me that it was all right with him -- but he wouldn't want his daughter to read it . . .)[7]

In an attempt to ban the book in Marin County, California in November of 1960, a Baptist minister preached to his flock of the "profanity, lewd words, and poor English" of Catcher. By his own admission he had judged the book only on the basis of excerpts; he had found Salinger's language so "sickening" he could not continue reading.[8]

The censors of Temple City, California did not succeed in banning the book, but they did raise a stir. A Mrs. Crippen, one of the group of parents who attempted to abolish the 11th grade English reading list containing Catcher, protested to school officials that she failed to understand why it was necessary to use a book which "takes the Lord's name in vain 295 times . . . "[9] She questioned the lack of the "constructive use of English" in the novel as well as the novel's value in building better vocabularies.[10] Another parent denounced the book because "the language is crude, profane, and obscene; not what you would expect of a boy given the advantage of private schools." This censor did not say whether or not one would expect such language from a boy not "given the advantage of private schools," but only that much of the language is "unfamiliar to many of our young people."[11]

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[5] Quoted in Fiene, The Controversy, p. 26.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Donald M. Fiene, "From a Study of Salinger: Controversy in the Catcher," The Realist, I (December, 1961), pp. 23-24.

[8] Everett T. Moore, "Catcher and Mice," ALA Bulletin, LV (March, 1961), p. 229.

When his college sophomore daughter brought home Catcher, one parent protested to the University of Texas. In a letter to politicians and newspapers, the parent stated his belief that:

> The Catcher in the Rye is not literature. It's trash . . . It's probably the filthiest book I've had an opportunity to read. There's not a page in it that you can print in a newspaper.

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[9] Mrs. Crippen, Letter to the Editor, Pasadena Star News, February 12, 1962. Reprinted: Marvin Laser and Norman Fruman (eds.), Studies in J. D. Salinger: Reviews, Essays, and Critiques of "The Catcher in the Rye" and Other Fiction (New York: The Odyssey Press, 1963), p. 127.

[10] Mrs. Crippen, cited by Kate Sexton, Pasadena Star News, February 7, 1962. Reprinted: Laser and Fruman, p. 125.

[11] Mr. DeMille, ibid.

> No sane person would use this language . . . . This book contains not one, but many, many damnings of the Almighty God as well as the use of filthy and vile terms.[12]

His daughter, who shared his views, added, "I think anybody who reads the book would have the same objections to the language that I do. I was shocked. I'm not used to that language."[13]

Time and time again, censors, or would-be censors, base their objections to the novel on its language. The book was removed from the Greenville College Library in Illinois because someone objected to "the stench of its vocabulary."[14] A spokesman for censors in Edgerton, Wisconsin called the book "one of the most obscene I have ever read . . . demoralizing phornography [sic]."[15]

Terse and emotional as many of these statements are, they each imply something about the nature of literature and its function in the schools. The brevity and vehemence of censors' statements alone implies that they have smelled smoke and may be screaming fire before fully investigating the source. Many censors have not had to read the complete novel before registering their primary objections. Censors need only read pages 181-184 of the Signet paperback to find that to which many of them first object.

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[12] William M. Hatten, "Co-Ed's Father Decries U.T.'s Required Reading," The Houston Post, April 27, 1961. Reprinted: Fiene, The Controversy, p.47.

[13] Quoted in Fiene, The Controversy, p. 48.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Quoted in Jerry Ambling, "Catcher in the Rye is Out," Madison Capitol Times, January 23, 1963, p. 6.

Many censors appear to react to words as things rather than as signs or symbols. They do not immediately object to the idea behind the word, it seems, but principally to the printed black marks on the paper and the sound when the word is read or spoken. Some censors are, then, finding the words sinful in themselves, an attitude which might be seen as analogous to a Fundamentalist interpretation of the Bible. These censors epitomize an extremely literal approach to the language of literature. Primitive man assigned great powers to words themselves. To write or to speak a man's name was to have a control, a power over him. This primitivism reflects a belief that words themselves have the power to control behavior. In her book The Gift of Language, Margaret Schlauch cites numerous examples, both ancient and contemporary, of the belief in the magic of language.

> Magic awe is strongest where there is a minimum of scientific training, of course. A woman who believes in the baleful power of the evil eye will also tremble at the sound of certain words of ill omen, believing that they can induce plague without the mediation of any germs known to the laboratory. Simple folk in various parts of the world who have vague or inaccurate ideas about paternity believe that mere phrases may bring about pregnancy in a woman; among them one is consequently apt to find cautious or veiled references to conception and gestation, as well as to wounds, blood, and death.[16]

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[16] Margaret Schlauch, The Gift of Language (New York: Dover, 1942), p. 17.

Apparently some censors, as we have seen, believe that the printed word "Fuck" in Catcher will conjure up immoral and anti-social behavior in the adolescent reader. Evidence for the effect the written word actually has upon behavior is somewhat inconclusive. Some psychologists and psychiatrists believe, like many of the censors, that the language, as well as other attributes of the novel which we shall discuss later, can affect the behavior of the reader. In particular, they believe that reading can cause anti-social behavior in the adolescent. Other psychologists and psychiatrists, however, believe that reading cannot cause such behavior, while still others see reading as a possible catharsis, preventing anti-social behavior. A brief annotated bibliography in Appendix A lists some of the opinions and studies on the effect of reading upon adolescent anti-social behavior. The interested reader is referred to this evidence.

In reacting to the printed words as things, and to the possible effects they might have, many of the censors we have cited (unlike the judges in the court cases discussed in Chapter I) are not concerned with the novel as a work of art. They do not assess why a taboo word appears, or what the attitudes of the author and the characters are toward the word and the idea it expresses.

Most censors do not consider the author's intent as have the courts, nor do most censors concern themselves with community standards or "l'homme moyen sensuel." Instead they usually seem to focus on the most susceptible reader of the novel. Most censors assume that the adolescent reader either has never heard of the particular objectionable words, or that he will be shocked or greatly pleased to see them in print.

Many censors also imply that a major function of the novel in the schools is to teach grammar and vocabulary, and that, therefore, the best books to teach would be those which are full of "proper" grammar and worthwhile vocabulary. By "proper" grammar the censors seem to mean socially accepted, formal written English, not necessarily that which is most fitting to the novel in question. This insistence treats the novel's written word again as a thing, as a tool which can be possessed apart from the function of the artist. The more correct tools a novel imparts, the more successful the novel apparently would be.

At least one professional critic aligns himself with the views of the censors on almost all these points. This critic, because he is quite explicit in his objections to Catcher, particularly to its language, is almost a spokesman for the censors. In the periodical Ramparts, Robert O. Bowen expresses the fears that most of the censors have when they see taboo language in print.

> Perhaps Salinger's strongest appeal -- being that usually aped by students -- is his aggressiveness against language taboos. Unlike Henry Miller, Salinger rarely violates the statute, but his tone and diction violate good taste as the following Catcher in the Rye

> samples indicate. "Poker up his ass," "Flitty-looking Tattersall vests," "she had very big knockers," "giving her a feel under the table." Such gaucheries amuse as "twenty-three skidoo" or "Oh you kid!" once did, but with the difference that the Salinger fan repeats them in mockery, often boasting that he is tearing down established standards. Grandfather's gaucheries differed in kind since they aimed at elevating the boy rather than reducing the surroundings.[17]

Bowen's assumptions concur with those of censors in two ways. First, both assume that the words might affect behavior. Bowen finds the words themselves offensive, calling them "gaucheries" because of their colloquial tone. In this writer's opinion, Bowen might not have objected to the word "rectum" or "anus" as much as he does to "ass." Nor perhaps would "touch" offend him as much as "feel" does. The less colloquial words are within the established standards of acceptable language, and therefore, presumably would not affect adolescent "tearing down of established attitudes." Secondly, Bowen assumes that the youthful reader might not use these words were it not for J. D. Salinger since the adolescent uses them in imitation of Holden Caulfield. Unlike many censors, however, Bowen has read the complete novel and is not merely shouting "Smut!" "Phornography!"

As a critic, Bowen perceives a rationale for Salinger's usage of taboo words and language. It is one he alone among the critics holds. But this of course does not invalidate it. Salinger's motives, Bowen asserts, are to corrupt, degrade, and "militate against traditional strictures."[18]

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[17] Robert O. Bowen, "The Salinger Syndrome: Charity Against Whom?" Ramparts, I (May, 1962), p. 52.

> Cast in a jargon promulgated from the shoddier prep schools of the East, the Salinger philosophy parallels the sick-sick line transmitted by Mort Sahl and related cosmopolitan think people.[19]

Bowen assumes that the invectives Holden utters on nearly every page are blasphemy, that Holden literally means what he is saying. Bowen goes on to state, moreover, that such words condition the reader to reacting in a blasphemous way.

> The steady attrition of blasphemy alone in *Catcher in the Rye* conditions the reader to a blasphemous view of the world. Throughout all of his work Salinger's first person narrators punctuate with Christ sake, Chrissake, Christ, Jesus, God Damn It, Goddam, I Swear to God, and varieties thereof. No one denies the practice of blasphemy among ill-bred people, but that observation does not explain how a reader can wallow in so much blasphemy and remain reverent toward either the Holy Name or anything else.[20]

Bowen's assumption of what is blasphemy is a partisan assumption, and may well be true for him. (See Chapter V.) Whether or not the "blasphemy" Bowen sees will condition the *reader* to blasphemy is a different question.

When we look at what most of the critics other than Bowen have said about *Catcher*, we see that many of them have objections concerning Salinger's language also, but that their objections differ from those of the censors. The critics complain not against the words themselves nor the effect they might have, but against Salinger's choice of them in his artistic intent of recreating the typical language of an adolescent. Most critics go beyond dealing only with isolated passages to examine these books within the framework of the motives of the author in creating a complete work of art. Virgilia Peterson, in an early review of the novel in the New York Herald Tribune, objects to the language not because she fears it might demoralize the readers, but because she considers it overdone, an artistic failure.

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[18] *Ibid.*

[19] *Ibid.*

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 54.

> The Catcher in the Rye repeats and repeats, like an incantation, the pseudo-natural cadences of a flat, colloquial prose which at best, banked down and understated, has a truly moving impact and at its worst is casually obscene. Recent war novels have accustomed us all to ugly words and images, but from the mouths of the very young and protected they sound peculiarly offensive. There is probably not one phrase in the whole book that Holden would not have used upon occasion, but when they are piled upon each other in cumulative monotony, the ear refuses to believe.[21]

Critics such as Miss Peterson who think that Salinger has not been successful in reproducing the language a teenager such as Holden would use are greatly in the minority. Most of the critics who deal with the language of the book praise Salinger for his intent and ability to reproduce the language typical of adolescence, yet keep it idiosyncratic to Holden himself.

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[21] Virgilia Peterson, "Three Days in the Bewildering World of an Adolescent," New York Herald Tribune Book Review, July 11, 1951, p. 3. Reprinted Malcolm Marsden, ed., If You Really Want to Know: A Catcher Casebook (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1963), pp. 3-4.

In defending Salinger's usage of slang and taboo words most critics see the language of the book as the idiom of the spoken, colloquial English of a particular American adolescent. Many critics feel that if such an adolescent were actually informally telling his adventures to someone, these are the words he would probably use. All but a few of the critics assume that Salinger was attempting to fulfill the artistic obligations and right of showing the reader exactly what he sees, leaving nothing out because it is in "poor taste."

Only one study deals extensively with the language of Catcher, but many of the ideas in this study have been expressed in passing by numerous other critics. In the periodical American Speech Donald P. Costello attempts to convince his readers that Salinger did not use taboo words to shock his readers or to demoralize the country, but that he was fulfilling his artistic intentions in rendering the typical informal speech of a teenager.

> Holden's informal, schoolboy vernacular is particularly typical in its "vulgarity" and "obscenity." No one familiar with prep-school speech could seriously contend that Salinger overplayed his hand in this respect. On the contrary, Holden's restraints help to characterize him as a sensitive youth who avoids the most strongly forbidden terms, and who never uses vulgarity in a self-conscious or phony way to help him be "one of the boys." Fuck for example, is never used as a part of Holden's speech. The word appears in the novel four times, but only when Holden disapprovingly discusses its wide appearance on walls. The Divine name is used habitually by Holden only in the comparatively weak for God's sake, God, and goddam. The stronger and usually more offensive for Chrissake or Jesus or Jesus Christ are used habitaully by Ackley and Stradlater; but Holden uses them only when

> he feels the need for a strong expression. He almost never uses *for Chrissake* in an unemotional situation. *Goddam* is Holden's favorite adjective. This word is used with no relationship to its original meaning, or to Holden's attitude toward the word to which it is attached. It simply expresses an emotional feeling toward the object; either favorable, as in "goddam hunting cap"; or unfavorable, as in "ya goddam moron"; or indifferent, as in "coming in the goddam windows." *Damn* is used interchangeably with *goddam*; no differentiation in its meaning is detectable.[22]

One of Costello's main points in the article is that throughout the novel Holden himself disapproves of obscenity. If the censors would look at Holden's reactions to the word *Fuck*, they would see that he was behaving much like a censor himself. As a catcher in the rye, he was trying to protect the young from the knowledge of evil and a debased side of life. Holden fails to see that he could initially direct or supervise young children in their innocent play and education. Instead, he wants to wait and catch them after they too had tumbled from "the fields of rye."

> I keep picturing all these little kids playing some game in this big field of rye and all. Thousands of little kids, and nobody is around - nobody big, I mean - except me. And I'm standing on the edge of some crazy cliff. What I have to do, I have to catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff - I mean if they're running and don't look where they're going I have to come out from somewhere and catch them. That's all I'd do all day. I'd just be the catcher in the rye and all.[23]

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[22] Donald P. Costello, "The Language of *The Catcher in the Rye*," *American Speech*, XXXIV (October, 1959), pp. 34-35.

[23] Jerome David Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye* (New York: New American Library, 1945), p. 156.

Holden doesn't worry about young children only seeing the word, but about the smutty and degrading way in which they will probably discover its meaning. He recognizes the problem and goes the way of the censors.

> But while I was sitting down, I saw something that drove me crazy. Somebody'd written "Fuck you" on the wall. It drove me damn near crazy. I thought how Phoebe and all the other little kids would see it, and how they'd wonder what the hell it meant, and then finally some dirty kid would tell them - all cockeyed, naturally - what it meant, and how they'd all *think* about it and maybe even worry about it *for a* couple of days . . . I was afraid some teacher would catch me rubbing it off and would think *I'd* written it. But I rubbed it out anyway, *finally*.[24]

Most censors fail to see Salinger's message that education, might, in fact, acknowledge the reality that taboo words do exist. Many of the critics have stated this point, but none as well as Warren French:

> Many have objected to the vulgar language of *Catcher*, especially to the use of the word *that* Holden finds scrawled on the school room and museum walls. The word is not employed, however, as stupid people suppose artists use words -- so that the writer can see how much he can get away with, but because it is demanded by the structure of the story. Salinger's very point is that we can not pretend that the word is not there by refusing to look at it, for it is written even on the walls of buildings where small children go to be educated.[25]

Some critics suggest that the teacher can point out to the students that the taboo words, Holden's slang, and even his choice of vocabulary and usage of grammar are integral to the novel as a piece of art and justifiable within that framework. Unlike the censors, most critics do not imply that readers, even adolescent readers, will consider Holden's language as a model to be copied. In discussing taboo language, even before Catcher was published, the anti-censorship essayist Morris L. Ernst suggested how the "modern teacher," rare as he may be, might deal with the problem.

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[24] *Ibid.*, p. 181.

[25] Warren French, *J. D. Salinger* (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1963), pp. 120-121.

> The schools of today address themselves openly and frankly to the problems of dirty sexual words. For example, nearly every child in the United States has whispered like a low sneak the word "fuck." The modern teacher explains the word, its derivational meaning "to plant," its former propriety in English society and its present disrepute which dictates the wisdom of its avoidance by those who do not care to become objectionable to friends and neighbors.[26]

Many critics, educators, and clerics who have dealt with the question of controversial books in the schools imply that teachers should deal with them openly; students should not read them sneakily behind a history book in study hall, or by flashlight in bed at night. Under the teacher's guidance taboo words can be taught as taboo words, as one would teach the word "aint." The following quotation from duplicated sheets handed out to students by Donald Fiene, the Louisville, Kentucky teacher who has written about the controversy over

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[26] Morris L. Ernst, To the Pure (New York: The Viking Press, 1928), p. 275. Ernst was, of course, anything but realistic in 1928 in explaining what does happen.

Catcher shows how one teacher has attempted to do this:

> When Holden wants to use a curse word or two he does it, because that's the way he usually talks. Most 16 year old boys curse a little bit, let's face it. However, remember that these words are basically bad words. Just because you read them in a book that's supposed to be good literature doesn't mean that you are now free to say hell and damn anywhere you please. The fact is, these words have to stay in the "bad" category or it wouldn't be any fun to use them.[27]

Furthermore, some of the critics also believe that the adolescent reader can see that the words themselves are not "bad," as Fiene implies by his quotation marks, but that they are socially unacceptable. Many educators, psychologists, and clergymen also share this view.

The language, including the faulty grammar, "lousy vocabulary," and taboo words, cannot be separated from the novel, most critics feel. J. D. Salinger presents a picture of an adolescent who would not be bothered to the point of erasure by "Kilroy was here," but is by "Fuck You." To understand the book is to understand why Holden speaks and acts as he does. Moreover, Fiene and others believe, to understand why and how Holden uses the language he does can lead to the understanding of the unacceptability of much of it.[28]

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[27] Fiene, "The Controversy," pp. 22-27.

[28] Psychologists Eberhard and Phyllis Kronhausen go one step further from the censors' fear of pornographic language by suggesting the "therapeutic value...of accepting the use of dirty words." "One little boy, during therapy, filled a whole notebook with the word 'fuck.' The therapeutic permissiveness gave him an opportunity to abreact his trauma around the word. After writing the word many, many times, it did not seem to be as terrible as he had been led to believe. It was

In the Catholic periodical *America* Father Harold C. Gardiner states his belief that if the student is made aware of the general unacceptability of certain words and of Salinger's "valid reasons" for using them, he will develop "clear-sighted spiritual poise that will not be unduly horrified by the language that has caused such a really needless furor over books like *Catcher in the Rye*".[29] The evil, then, some critics would say, exists not in the word or words themselves, but in the eye of the beholder.

Many eyes have seen and probably many others will continue to see "evil" in the words of *The Catcher in the Rye.* Despite the rationale that many critics have given for

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just a word in our language and not a dangerous monster which would destroy him. Clinically, therefore, there is obvious therapeutic value in accepting the use of 'forbidden' words. From the preventive point of view of good mental hygiene, however, (and that is what's really important), if the use of these words did not provoke a 'horror' reaction in the first place, they would not assume disproportionate value in creating fright and guilt."(Eberhard and Phyllis Kronhausen, *Pornography and the Law* [New York: Ballantine Books, 1959], pp. 141, 134-135.)

[29] Harold C. Gardiner, "Reply to E. P. J. Corbett," *America*, CIV (January 7, 1961), p.444.

At almost the same time that a Berkeley student was arrested for displaying the initials of the Freedom Under Clark Kerr committee on a sign at a Sproul Hall rally, the following was published in a Catholic book on obscenity, the arts, and children. "The reader may be surprised to find the 'dirty' word transformed into something clean and meaningful. But there is no word so 'dirty' that it cannot be cleansed through The Word, even as there is no dimension of existence so dirty that it cannot be reached by God's redeeming Love." (Clayton C. Barbeau, "Introduction: Four Letter Words and Art," *Art, Obscenity and Your Children*, ed. Clayton C. Barbeau [St. Meinrad, Indiana: Abbey Press, 1967], p. 24.)

Salinger's language and despite the praise many of them have for his colloquial style, many censors and at least one critic find some of the words objectionable. There is, therefore, no reason to believe that censors will not continue to try and remove Salinger's graffitti from schoolroom bookshelves.

"The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn": Taboo Words and Colloquial Speech

The eye of the censor has often beheld evil in the language of The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. Albert Bigelow Paine, the biographer of Mark Twain, tells us that Olivia, Twain's wife, was the first to complain of profanity in her husband's writings. According to Paine and Van Wyck Brooks, she was assisted in this endeavor by Twain's friend and fellow writer, William Dean Howells. In his famous and controversial work, The Ordeal of Mark Twain, Brooks asserts that Olivia's pressures against Twain and her constant desire for his "gentility," harmfully affected most of his writings. Huck Finn, however, escaped, or perhaps was even the product of this repression.[30] In a letter Howells warned Twain that he should omit Huck's swearing in Tom Sawyer, particularly the phrase, "they come me all to hell." But Twain resisted the censorship. He writes:

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[30] Van Wyck Brooks, The Ordeal of Mark Twain (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1920), p. 190.

> Mrs. Clemens received the mail this morning... and the next minute she lit into the study with danger in her eye and this demand on her tongue, 'Where is the profanity Mr. Howells speaks of?' Then I had to miserably confess that I had left it out when reading the ms. to her. Nothing but almost inspired lying got me out of this scrape with my scalp. Does your wife give you rats, like that, when you go a little one-sided?[31]

In Tom Sawyer the word "hell" was changed to "thunder," but Mark Twain did "go a little one-sided" in Huck Finn, and censors other than Olivia and Howells have attacked him for it ever since.

When the novel was removed as a text for junior high and elementary schools in the City of New York in 1957, one of the reasons given was that the word "nigger" was used. A representative of the NAACP, which does not officially condemn or condone bannings of the book, had the following to say about the offending word:

> The point of view many Negroes take is that if you can ban the use of words in Tropic of Cancer ... for use in the schools, why can't you ban words like kike, nigger, and darkie?[32]

One publisher seeing that this problem had arisen before and anticipating that it would probably happen again, brought out an edition of the novel which replaced the word "nigger" with "negro." But this edition also ran into trouble because of its failure to capitalize the word "Negro."[33] This might lead one to suspect that even though the word "nigger" is objectionable to many, the stereotype behind this word (and the word "darkie") is what really bother the censors. (For a discussion of the censors' racial objections see Chapter IV.)[34]

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[31] Mark Twain, quoted in Brooks, p. 127.

[32] Gloster Current, NAACP official quoted in Nelson and Roberts, p. 171.

[33] New York Times, (September 12, 1957), p. 1.

At least one critic, Delancey Ferguson, agreed with many of the opinions of the censors and supports Olivia Clemens' attempts to censor the works of her husband.

> The censorship of vocabulary is a matter of taste also, but one in which the past half-century has seen a radical change. Messrs. Joyce, Hemingway, and Faulkner have left a few words unwritten. But the theory behind such a remark as Mr. Brooks's about "bold and masculine" language, and behind the practice of Hemingway and Faulkner, involves a huge fallacy -- that strength depends on vocabulary.
>
> ... Every age imposes its special taboos of theme and diction, yet somehow every age, within its limitations, produces durable literature. In removing a few "hells" and "stenches," Olivia undoubtedly made her husband's work more acceptable to his contemporaries, and did little to impair its permanent quality.[35]

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[34] In October of 1964 the Lincoln Nebraska Human Relations Council Education Committee requested that the superintendent of schools alert teachers that the "Little Black Sambo" story had "potentially offensive racial overtones." The superintendent said, according to the Lincoln Evening Journal:

> ... It is impossible to remove the name of the little boy in the story and retain its original form. Because this term (Sambo) is objectionable to many persons, the story will be optional with readers. (Lincoln Evening Journal, Lincoln, Nebraska, October 22, 1964, p. 1.)

[35] De Lancey Ferguson, "The Case for Mark Twain's Wife," University of Toronto Quarterly, IX (October, 1939), pp. 13-14.

Most of the critics, however, disagree with Ferguson and believe that one reason Huck is great is because Twain resisted Olivia's censorship. They believe, furthermore, in what Ferguson calls this "huge fallacy" -- that Twain's language is appropriate and that part of the strength of the novel depends upon it. Van Wyck Brooks, of whom we spoke earlier, and of whom Ferguson speaks, asserts that Twain's greatness depends, to some extent, upon his resistance to Olivia's pressures.

> ... to Mrs. Clemens virility was just as offensive as profanity ... she had no just sense of the distinction between virility and profanity and vulgarity ... she had, in short, no positive taste at all. We can see also that she had no artistic ideal for her husband, that she regarded his natural liking for bold and masculine language, which was one of the outward signs of his latent greatness, merely, as a literary equivalent of bad manners, as something that endangered their common prestige in the eyes of conventional opinion.[36]

Critics feel that if Mark Twain had had Huck Finn say "perspiration" instead of "sweat," his character would not have been Huck Finn; had he had him say, "All right then, I'll go to the bad place,"the impact of Huck's decision would have been lost. Lionel Trilling remarks that much early American literature is false because it "lapses into rhetorical excess," but that

> out of his knowledge of the actual speech of America Mark Twain forged a classic prose. The adjective may seem a strange one, yet it is apt. Forget the misspellings and the faults

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[36] Brooks, p. 126.

> of grammar, and the prose will be seen to move with the greatest simplicity, directness, lucidity, and grace.... He is the master of the style that escaped the fixity of the printed page, that sounds in our ears with the immediacy of the heard voice, the very voice of unpretentious truth.[37]

Trilling is only one of many critics who find praise for the colloquial speech of Huck. Even as venerable a critic as T. S. Eliot says that "there is no exaggeration of grammar or spelling, or speech, there is no sentence or phrase to destroy the illusion that these are Huck's own words."[38]

Many critics see the faithful copying of a particular dialect or type of speech as part of the role of the novelist. They imply that the truthfulness of the author in creating his characters through their speech surpasses any considerations of unacceptability or ungenility which might prevent him from presenting the language "as in itself it really is." As we have seen, some censors seem to want Jim to sound like Ralph Bunche and Huck to sound like a college graduate.[39]

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[37] Lionel Trilling,"Introduction" to The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (Rinehart Edition ; New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1948), pp. xvii, xvii-xviii.

[38] T. S. Eliot, "Introduction" to The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (London: The Cresset Press, 1950), p. x.

[39] Recently, Jonathan Kozol was fired from the Roxbury section of the Boston Public Schools, supposedly because he taught poems by Langston Hughes. The Deputy Superintendent of the Boston Schools commented on one poem in particular which was about a slum landlord and his tenant: "We are trying to break the speech patterns of these children, trying to get them to speak properly... This poem does not present grammatical expressions and would just entrench the speech patterns we want to break." (As quoted in the Boston Herald, June 13, 1965)

They feel that novels read in the schools should present positive models of speech, especially if the dialect as written by the author is seen by them as demeaning, as Negro groups often see Jim's speech.[40]

Critics see the artist creating a work of art mirroring life. Most of them, unlike the censors, do not fear that the reader will play the sedulous ape and copy the dialect, grammar, and "unsuitable" language of Huck Finn. Even Twain's severest censor, Olivia, admitted that perhaps, in the case of Huck Finn, her husband might be allowed to use realistic language since, "Anything that little vagabond said might be safely trusted to pass the censor, just because, as an irresponsible boy, he could not, in the eyes of the mighty ones of this world, know anything in any case about life, morals and civilization."[41]

But some censors do complain when they see the language of Huck and Jim as a model for youth to copy rather than that of a fictional "little vagabond," and an escaped slave. However, Twain's language does not contain what is generally thought of as lewd, lascivious, unchaste, or sexually obscene words. J. D. Salinger uses the words "Fuck you"; Twain does not. Holden Caulfield is gravely concerned with the graffitti he finds on walls; they obsess him for the second half of the novel. Huck, on the other hand, also discovers graffitti (on the walls of the floating house); but quickly dismisses them as "the ignorantest kinds of words and pictures...."[42]

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[40] "This the Negro Owes Himself," editorial, Christian Science Monitor, September 14, 1957.

[41] Quoted in Brooks, p. 194.

As we know, Olivia Clemens was wrong about Huck's language. Much of what Huck said has not passed the censors. Although many literary critics consider The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn a masterpiece of American literature, teachers, administrators, and others have found it necessary to defend the language of the novel so that it might remain in schools.

"The Grapes of Wrath": Obscenity, Profanity, and Dialect

John Steinbeck's novel, The Grapes of Wrath, has also suffered attacks upon its language. The Burress study of censorship in Wisconsin cites three objections which complain that the novel is "immoral and obscene."[43] The Ahrens study lists three objections to the novel, two of which mentioned its language.[44] The Kansas City, Missouri Board of Education banned the novel on the grounds of "obscenity" as early as 1939. One censor who favored burning the book in East St. Louis, Illinois, said that the novel is "vile all the way through."[45]

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[42] Mark Twain, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (New York: P.F. Collier & Son Company, 1918; originally by Harper & Brothers, 1884), p. 70.

[43] Burress, p. 19.

[44] Ahrens, p. 127.

[45] St. Louis, Mo., Globe-Democrat, quoted in Warren French, A Companion to 'The Grapes of Wrath' (New York: The Viking Press, 1963), p. 131.

Many of the more vociferous attacks on the book did, understandably, begin in Oklahoma and California. A review published in the Oklahoma City Times on May 4, 1939 entitled "Grapes of Wrath? Obscenity and Inaccuracy," called it a "morbid, filthy-worded novel."[46] The editor of this newspaper also spoke of Grapes in his column, "The Tiny Times," "If you have children, I'd advise against leaving the book around home. It has Tobacco Road looking as pure as Charlotte Bronte, when it comes to obscene, vulgar, lewd, stable language."[47]

A Congressman from Oklahoma (who is quoted more fully elsewhere) had the following to say about Steinbeck's language:

> Take the vulgarity out of this book and it would be blank from cover to cover. It is painful to me to further charge that if you take the obscene language out, its author could not sell a copy.[48]

A pastor from Ardmore, Oklahoma warned that the book might "popularize iniquity" since Steinbeck handled the profanity so well.[49] Westbrook Pegler, never one to equivocate, complained that Grapes had "the dirtiest language I have ever seen on paper."[50]

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[46] "Grapes of Wrath? Obscenity and Inaccuracy," The Oklahoma City Times, May 4, 1939. Quoted in Martin Staples Shockley, "The Reception of The Grapes of Wrath in Oklahoma," American Literature, XV (January, 1944), p. 353.

[47] Mr. W. W. Harrison, quoted in Shockley, p. 354.

[48] Congressman Lyle Boren, quoted in Shockley, p. 358.

[49] The Rev. Lee Rector, quoted in Shockley, p. 359.

Most of the people who have commented on the language of the book, including critics, have argued that parts of it are at least indecent. Censors have argued that the novel should be banned because the language is obscene, but many critics have questioned whether or not Steinbeck was artistically correct in portraying the Okies, including their speech, as they actually were. Heywood Broun seemingly agrees with both when he accepts Steinbeck's intent, but questions his success.

> I do not see a necessary connection between proletarian literature and some set percentage of words which bring the blushes to a maiden's cheek. Of course, I respect the complete integrity of Steinbeck's artistic sincerity. Indeed I think The Grapes of Wrath is a novel of great significance, and one cannot write of misery and men crushed to the ground without having access to words that are earthy. But at times I think a kind of phoniness creeps in.[51]

Broun, like the censors cited, feels that Steinbeck uses too much "earthy" language, but, unlike the censors, Broun views this as an artistic failure and not just a device to sell books.

Still another critic, B. R. McElderry, refers to the novel in terms of its "reader-interest" and the artist's intent, saying that they must not come into conflict with each other. McElderry, like the censors, wonders if

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[50] Westbrook Pegler, quoted in "Red Meat and Red Herrings," The Commonweal, XXX (October 13, 1939), p. 562.

[51] Heywood Broun, quoted ibid.

> it might be a question as to whether or not the freedom of language is always essential to the intent, or whether a few "sons of bitches" are not thrown in to increase the extent of the book among certain readers.[52]

To some of the critics at least, Steinbeck's language does serve his intent and is not merely a sensationalist tactic to sell books. Joseph Warren Beach says that Grapes

> . . . is a notable work of fiction by virtue of the fact that all social problems are so effectively dramatized in individual situations and characters -- racy, colorful, pitiful, farcical, disorderly, all meaning, shrewd, brave, ignorant, loyal, anxious, obstinate, suppressible, cockeyed ... mortals. I have never lived among these Okies nor heard them talk. But I would swear that this is their language, these their thoughts. . . .[53]

Other critics, however, have pointed out that Steinbeck had lived and traveled with the Okies, knew their language well, and faithfully reproduced it in his novel.[54]

Many critics make the point that the Joads are Okies and speak like Okies, just as Holden Caulfield speaks like a prep school renegade. Steinbeck, like Salinger, does not clean up his speech for the sake of convention or gentility.

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[52] B. R. McElderry, Jr., "The Grapes of Wrath: In the Light of Modern Critical Theory," College English, V (March, 1944), p. 310.

[53] Joseph Warren Beach, American Fiction, 1920-1940 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941), pp. 345-346.

[54] Warren G. French, A Companion to "The Grapes of Wrath" (New York: The Viking Press, 1963), p. 51. Also Peter Lisca, The Wide World of John Steinbeck (New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University Press, 1958), p. 145.

Critics, like the censors, recognize possible objectionable language in the novel, but, unlike the censors, most of them accept, or even praise Steinbeck for his realism. In discussing the universal qualities in Steinbeck's language, the Russian critic R. Orlova tries to differentiate two different styles within the novel.

> Steinbeck has been subjected to much criticism, because of the slang -- the dialect in which his heroes speak, little understood outside Oklahoma -- and the profanity with which the novel is colored. His heroes use the dialect of Oklahoma's declassed farmers of the middle thirties; but the development of images and ideas in the book demands also other language so that side by side with the "low" arises the "high" style of the book. The two styles are, of course, not separate, but joined by a great number of complex and controversial connections.[55]

Of course, Orlova is not correct in his statement that the dialect is little understood outside Oklahoma. He seems to accept, or perhaps only to tolerate, the "low" style because it is interwoven with the "high" style. He does not accept the "low" style for itself, as do other critics, and in opposition to many of them, he sees Biblical influence only on the "high" style.

> The high style of the book can be traced back to the Bible. The Bible is a unique book, read by many Americans for a century and a half at those times during which the national character was being formed and the foundations of a national culture laid ... Steinbeck artistically transformed the language of the Bible into part of the organic alloy called The Grapes of Wrath.[56]

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[55] R. Orlova, "Money against Humanity: Notes on the Work of John Steinbeck," trans. Armin Moscovic, Inostrannia Literature (USSR), No. 3 (March, 1962), Reprinted: French, Companion, p. 158.

[56] Ibid., pp. 158-159.

Critic Martin Staples Shockley, on the other hand, identifies the language of the complete novel, including the dialogue, with that of the Bible. Shockley's appraisal of Steinbeck's language views it in the context of literature and the intent of the artist, attempting to give it respectability by comparing it to the language of the Bible.

> Major characters speak a language that has been associated with debased Piedmont culture. It is, I suggest, easy to find in vocabulary, rhythm, imagery and tone pronounced similarities to the language of the King James Bible. These similarities, to be seen in qualities of simplicity, purity, strength, vigor, earnestness, are easy to illustrate. The novel contains passages of moving tenderness and prophetic power, not alone in dialogue, but even in descriptive and exposition passages.[57]

Shockley goes as far with his praise as the censors go with their blame. What Westbrook Pegler sees as filth, Shockley sees as art. Between them there exists a full array of opinions on the language of the book, including the middle ground where some censors and some critics agree that there is much objectionable language in the book. But even when the censors and the critics agree on this one point, they disagree in their implications. As we have seen, some critics take the viewpoint that the language cannot harm if it is seen in perspective as integral to the novel, while most censors seldom even admit the possibility that the language will not demoralize or corrupt.

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[57] Shockley, "Christian Symbolism in The Grapes of Wrath," College English XVIII (November, 1956), p. 87. See Lisca (pp. 160-161) who compares the language not only to that of the Bible, but also to that of Greek tragedy.

"1984":Relativism in Language

The language in *1984* has received little comment from censors and critics.[58] Orwell's language and his statements about language will be discussed here, however, since what censors might consider "controversial" in Orwell's language is, for the most part, different from that of the other authors and since concepts about taboo words expressed in *1984* are relevant here. Although there is little or no "profanity" in the novel, there are isolated passages which upset the would-be censor as he browses through it.[59]

Orwell does not use words which generally shock, as does Salinger. He also refrains from the use of words Olivia Clemens would refer to as "ungenteel." The words used are, in fact, typically quite refined. Phyllis and Eberhardt Kronhausen, in discussing levels of linguistic usage in their book Pornography and the Law, say that

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[58] Burress lists several references to profanity and one to obscenity in his Wisconsin study, but he does not elaborate on them. (Burress, p. 20). Ahrens lists three incidents having to do with "vulgarity," but she does not elaborate either. (Ahrens, p. 133.) Most of the major objections to the book will be discussed in Chapter IV.

[59] In one passage, Orwell does use the letter "F" and an extended hyphen followed by the word "bastards" and the word "buggers." "The woman hoisted herself upright and followed them out with a yell of 'F———— bastards! ... Only the buggers put me there.'" (Geo. Orwell, *1984* [New York: New American Library, 1963], p. 188.) It *seems* to this writer that any other language would have been inappropriate for the speaker, a lower class, angry drunken woman.

It is interesting to notice different approaches to avoiding the use of the word. Orwell, or his publisher, uses an extended dash. Often three hyphens, somewhat more of a"clue", follow the letter F. Or, like Norman Mailer in *Naked and the Dead*, authors use the homophone "Fug."

> The English language has, for example, two entirely different sets of vocabulary for these matters [sexual and excretory functions]. One set of words is derived from the Latin and serves us for polite and scientific discourse. The other set of words is of Anglo-Saxon origin and is used for informal talk, and especially when we want to express ourselves more emphatically. The Anglo-Saxon vocabulary is learned much earlier than the Latin synonym and therefore remains the preferred language of the emotions. These "primitive" terms remain closely connected with the things and actions for which they stand, while their "refined" verbal supplanters have undergone the process by which they have become further removed and of lesser emotional value than the things they signify. For that reason, the vernacular terms are more subject to self-or-socially-imposed censorship than their scientific equivalents.[60]

One can dispute whether or not the "Anglo-Saxon vocabulary" is that which is learned much earlier, but most would agree that it is the vocabulary from which many of our "unacceptable" words come. As we have seen earlier, many argue that it is because these words are shrouded in secrecy that they remain unacceptable. Although Orwell does not generally use these "Anglo-Saxon" words, he does deal with the problem of taboo language in 1984.

In 1984 Winston Smith illustrates the effect propaganda and conditioning have upon the use of language when he remembers that his wife was taught by the Party that "sexual intercourse was to be looked on as a slightly disgusting minor operation, like having an enema. This again was never put into plain words, but in an indirect way it was rubbed into every Party member from childhood onwards."[61] Winston remembers "that she had two names for it. One was 'making a baby' and the other was 'our duty to the Party' (yes, she had actually used that phrase)."[62]

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[60] Kronhausen, p. 136.

One solution to the problem of unacceptable words is incorporated into the plans of the Party in 1984. Not only sexual, but political thought is regulated by exorcizing undesirable words from the "official" language, Newspeak.

> "Don't you see that the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought? In the end we shall make thought-crime literally impossible, because there will be no words to express it. Every concept that can ever be needed will be expressed in exactly one word, with its meaning rigidly defined and all its subsidiary meaning rubbed out and forgotten. Already, in the Eleventh Edition, we're not far from that point. But the process will still be continuing long after you and I are dead. Every year fewer and fewer words, and the range of consciousness always a little smaller. Even now, of course there's no reason or excuse for committing thought-crime. It's merely a question of self-discipline, reality-control. But in the end there won't be any need for that. The Revolution will be complete when the language is perfect.[63]

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[61] George Orwell, 1984 (Signet Classics; New York: New American Library, 1963; originally by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., 1949), p. 57.

[62] Ibid., p. 58.

[63] Ibid., pp. 46-47.

In the Appendix to 1984 Orwell describes the principle of Newspeak. No word in Newspeak would be unacceptable; no word would be obscene. No word would have heretical meanings, as much as possible all words would be devoid of secondary meanings. It would be impossible to express in Newspeak anything which differed from the political beliefs of 1984's Ingsoc. It would be impossible, for almost all citizens, to express or to even think sexual thoughts undesirable to the authorities. Orwell says that the sexual life of the Party Member

> ...was entirely regulated by the two Newspeak words sexcrime (sexual immorality) and goodsex (chastity). Sexcrime covered all sexual misdeeds whatever. It covered fornication, adultery, homosexuality, and other perversions, and, in addition, normal intercourse practiced for its own sake. There was no need to enumerate them separately, since they were all equally culpable, and in principle, all punishable by death.[64]

Certain knowledge is limited to citizens in any country because of security reasons. Certain books, pictures, and photographs have been limited to the libraries of doctors, medical schools, and researchers. Jargon and specialized terminology is idiosyncratic to particular groups, but this is not by legal or political fiat, but rather by practical circumstances. In Newspeak, the C vocabulary was known and heard only by those who needed it in their technical or scientific vocations.

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[64] Ibid., p. 251.

> In the C vocabulary, which consisted of scientific and technical words, it might be necessary to give specialized names to certain sexual aberrations, but the ordinary citizen had no need of them. He knew what was meant by goodsex -- that is to say, normal intercourse between man and wife, for the sole purpose of begetting children, and without physical pleasure on the part of the woman; all else was sexcrime. In Newspeak it was seldom possible to follow a heretical thought further than the perception that it was heretical; beyond that point the necessary words were nonexistent.[65]

If our society were like the society of Orwell's 1984 and it were impossible to express certain sexual or heretical thoughts, there would be nothing in textbooks (if there were textbooks at all) to which the censors could object. As Orwell implies, there is a certain relativism in language standards. Acceptability of certain language does depend, to a very large extent, upon the society, the time, and often to the existent types and powers of restraints.

Summary

As we have seen, there are different types of words and linguistic devices to which the censors object. Objections to "ain't" can be as loud as objections to "fuck." Moreover, the censor's attitudes towards the language in some cases is not indigenous to them alone. Critics and educators at times do agree with the censors.

Most of the censors, however, reach their decisions by what seem to be quicker, more emotional routes than those taken by critics and teachers. Most critics consider the context in which the questionable word or language is used. The critics do not often consider the words as things in themselves, but see them as part of, and inseparable from the novel itself. This tendency has lead, at times, to the opposite of the censor's condemnations, that is, an apotheosis of the word because of the author's realism or verisimilitude in language.

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[65] Ibid., pp. 251-252.

Critics do not advocate that we teach Catcher because "fuck" is used, enabling the reader to understand its unacceptability, nor do they advocate that Grapes be taught because it enables the reader to see the Okie dialect. But some critics have, however, attempted to explain how the language fits the novel. The critics sometimes believe that the reader might understand and be made more aware of "unacceptable" language and dialect by coming in contact with it.

Finally, there is a relativism involved in controversial language. Taboo words change along with changes in society. "Sweat" does not bother as it once did, but "nigger" does. The process of change, however, will probably not rid the language of taboo words, nor will taboo words censors object to become accepted in the foreseeable future. More likely, the taboo words will remain, others will possibly be added to the list and objections to the language of certain novels used in the secondary schools might change, but they will continue

CHAPTER III

THE CHARACTERS OF THE NOVELS: CENSORS' AND CRITICS' VIEWPOINTS

In her book How to Read a Novel, critic and novelist Caroline Gordon tells of her aunt who was sure her niece would not indulge in adultery, incest, or rape, but was worried that people who didn't know Miss Gordon would think that she had committed these acts since she writes of them in her novels. Miss Gordon also tells of a New England friend of hers who would not read a novel with the word "black" in its title or which portrays cruelty to children or animals. This same New England friend said that she would never allow any of Faulkner's characters inside her house.[1]

Miss Gordon says that although both of these women were well-read and intellectual, they did not know how to read a novel. When a literary critic says that someone does not know how to read a novel, he means that the person does not read a novel in the same way as do critics, or at least in the same way as the literary critic would want him to read a novel. The censors may or may not be well read and intellectual, but, in the critic's terms, most of them do not know how to read a novel either.

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[1] Caroline Gordon, How to Read a Novel (New York: The Viking Press, 1953), pp. 1-5.

If the censor gets beyond his objection to the easily identified questionable language, he often will direct his attack at the characters who populate the book in question. Censors, especially when they are trying to "protect the morals of youth," have condemned _The Catcher in the Rye_, _The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn_, and _The Grapes of Wrath_ by disapproving of the characters in these books. Characters who come into contact with sex or violence, who show disrespect to parents or to school, who lie and steal, or who go against the dictates of society are particularly suspect.

Censors apparently don't want schoolchildren associating with people like Huck Finn, Holden Caulfield, Tom Joad, and Rev. Casy. Just as Miss Gordon's friend didn't want any of Faulkner's characters in her house, the censor doesn't want certain characters in the schools. Miss Gordon's friend, however, meant the characters themselves, not the books. The censors go farther; often they mean the books themselves.

* * * *

"The Catcher in the Rye": The Disturbed, Alienated Adolescent

Many censors have seen Holden Caulfield as the epitome of a bad influence on the youthful reader. A censor in Louisville complained that Holden Caulfield "is not a normal boy. The book tells of sexual perversion and 14 and 15 yearolds are not ready for abnormal psychology."[2] The father of a University of Texas sophomore called Catcher "nothing more than the story of a male prostitute."[3] A doctor in Edgerton, Wisconsin added fuel to the fires of the censors, saying the following:

> A boy in high school has a very fertile mind. He is at the peak of his drives. He can find his way around without having additional stimuli in school.[4]

Another spokesman in the Edgerton, Wisconsin controversy was a college student who criticized The Catcher in the Rye, as a poor book, not well written, and one that supports the "cult of the teen-ager."[5] This spokesman might have been implying that teen-agers copy Holden because Holden represents a "teen-age cult" alienated from society.

Lee Burress, in his study of Wisconsin censorship controversies, reports that one of the main objections to the novel has been the assertion that it is a clinically accurate

> report of a disturbed adolescent. The argument runs that such a description might be disturbing to other adolescents as they progress through the various stages of resolutions of their own oedipal conflicts.[6]

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[2] Fiene, The Controversy, p. 26.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ambling, Madison Capital Times, January 23, 1963.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Lee A. Burress, letter to J.S.K., November 1, 1963.

Many censors have supplemented their thinking of Catcher as the case history of a perverted adolescent with implications that he is also a perverting adolescent. As they did with language (Chapter II), many censors assign powers of corruption to a character in a book. The censors cited read Catcher as if it were an actual autobiography; or, ignoring the first person narrative style, as if it were a psychiatric case history. Almost all of them think that Holden is disturbed; some of them think that he is severely disturbed and perverted. Seldom do they see him as being a representative teen-ager.

Holden's truthfulness, his frankness and openness in expressing emotions seem to be what is upsetting to many censors. Holden's contacts with sexuality, hypocrisy, and some of the more sordid aspects of the adult world are not the types of experiences which many censors would, in this writer's opinion, want adolescents to be aware of. Nor are they, moreover, the types of experiences in which most censors would want adolescents to participate.

Critic Robert O. Bowen supports the views of censors and states the effect he believes a character in literature can have upon a reader.

> Neither Salinger nor his cohorts have drawn a picture of the average or typical twentieth century American youth. Even taking into account students corrupted by Freudian psychology teachers and beatnik humanities lecturers, the Holden Caulfield type is relatively rare and remains a grotesque, an aberrant.

> When our culture was more consciously Christian, aberrants were considered wrong; in medieval carvings artists pointedly depicted grotesques as evil monsters. In Salinger we find the grotesque not designed to hold our pity because it is a poor soul lost to order, to virtue, but rather designed for our admiration because it is grotesque. We do not see Holden across the chasm, lost from humanity; instead he is offered as a model which our youth is asked to ape. Quite clearly Salinger draws a picture of evil, and his apologists use that picture as propaganda in an effort to draw us into evil.[7]

Even if Salinger were trying to do what Bowen accuses him of, the premise that reading about anti-social behavior can draw us into such behavior is perhaps Bowen's and the censors' most problematical assertion. As we have said in Chapter II, psychiatrists, psychologists, judges, critics and theologians have argued about the effect of reading upon the behavior of the reader without ever coming to any consensus. (See Appendix A.)

A few critics do agree that Holden is severely "sick," but do not think of him as a model whom Salinger holds up for readers to imitate, and who, in fact, can cause anti-social behavior in those who read about him. Most critics do not expect the reader to act like the character he reads about. Rather, they hope that the reader might gain insight and knowledge from the actions of the character. When the character has no insight into himself, critics often proclaim the work an artistic failure. What they want from an immature or disturbed character is change, recognition, maturity. When there is none, many feel no insight can occur on the part of the reader, nor can vicarious learning from the mistakes of others take place. Many critics believe that by understanding the character, even if the character is "sick," the reader need not be made "sick" himself, but can instead gain insight and knowledge.

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[7] Bowen, p. 60.

A critic such as John Aldridge complains because he feels that Salinger has not fulfilled his role as an artist. Aldridge is bothered because Holden

> remains at the end what he was at the beginning--cynical, defiant, and blind. And as for ourselves, there is identification but no insight....[8]

Aldridge is greatly in the minority with this view. Most of the critics feel that the novel succeeds in offering insight. This offering of insight, most would agree, explains one reason why Catcher is so often chosen to be taught in the high school and college and why it is so widely read by the adolescent. Catcher offers an understanding of Holden, who many see not as a defiant cynic, but as an average teenager. In an early review of Catcher Ernest Jones became the first in a line of many critics to see the novel as the case study of a normal adolescent, not an aberrant.

> It reflects something not at all rich and strange, but what every sensitive sixteen year old since Rousseau has felt, and of course what each of us is certain he has felt.[9]

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[8] John W. Aldridge, In Search of Heresy (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1956), p. 131.

[9] Ernest Jones, "Case History of All of Us," Nation, CLXXIII (September 1, 1951), p. 176.

Many of the critics think Holden represents adolescence and discuss the extent to which Holden's problems are the problems of all youth. In attempting to understand the character they diagnose Holden's problems, their cause and universality, instead of dismissing him as "abnormal," a "male prostitute," or unfit to be studied in the schools, as have some censors. Warren French states:

> Even though Holden acknowledges being attended by a psychoanalyst at the end of the book, his breakdown is clearly not just--or even principally mental. He is physically ill. He has grown six and a half inches in a year and "practically got T.B." (8) He also admits that he is "skinny" and has not kept to the diet that he should to gain weight (140). He is passing through the most physically difficult period of adolescence when only the most sympathetic care can enable the body to cope with the changes it is undergoing. Holden's condition is complicated, however, by emotional problems. His mother is ill and nervous, and his father is so busy being successful that he never discusses things with his son (140). Holden is thus without the kind of parental guidance an adolescent urgently needs during this crucial period. The school to which he has been packed off fails to take the place of his parents.... Although Holden is trying to cling to an unrealistically rigid Victorian moral code, he also lacks what David Riesman calls the "psychological gyroscope" that keeps the "inner-directed" personality on course. (To classify Holden in the terms provided by The Lonely Crowd, he is an "inner-directed" personality in an "other-directed" society--an unhappy phenomenon so common today that it alone could account for many persons' identification with Holden).[10]

Holden is unique, yet he is representative. Many of his problems may, in fact, be due to the ever-present "adolescent growth spurt." Because Holden's problems are not his problems alone, but are those faced by most adolescents, French implies that the book would point out to young readers that they are not alone in thinking the things they think, in feeling the things they do, in doing what they do. Such a belief, however, is totally different from what some of the censors and Bowen imply -- that the adolescent thinks these things and feels these ways because he reads Salinger. Reading Catcher to most of the critics is viewed as helpful, not harmful, to the adolescent with his problems of growing up. Many psychologists and psychiatrists, in fact, have expressed opinions that reading literature can offer the adolescent "catharsis" and thus actually prevent, rather then promote, anti-social behavior.

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[10] French, Salinger, pp. 108-109.

Some critics have gone even further from the censors to think of Holden not as a "normal" adolescent, but as a symbol of innocence. The amounts of innocence they have ascribed to him have varied. One of the most extreme views is that of Bernard F. Oldsey who says the following in College English:

> As a Wordsworthian or Rousseauistic version of the little boy lost, Holden represents Romantic innocence in search of continuing truth... So the boy of sanity, of peace and truth and beauty, lights out for his own rye-covered territory and finds his own retreat.[11]

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[11] Bernard F. Oldsey, "The Movies in the Rye," College English, XXIII (December, 1961), p. 214.

Critics have gone quite far in apotheosizing Holden Caulfield. Proponents of this extremely romantic view hold that Salinger has set up Holden as a symbol of goodness. Holden is to many of them the sensitive teenager, buffeted by society, but he is also a naif, an innocent, and even to some such as Donald Barr, an unfinished saint, "troubled, lost, but in the image of God."[12]

Such extreme views have brought cries of denunciation from critics not so Rousseauistic. Leslie Fidler has become an iconoclast to many because of his reaction against what he sees as Salinger's apotheosis of Holden. Fiedler dismisses Salinger as "the last reputable exploiter of the sentimental myths of childhood."[13] Other critics have expressed disapproval of Salinger and Holden, but Alfred Kazin has been most explicit in his reaction against the "Salinger cult."

> Holden Caulfield is also cute in *The Catcher in the Rye*, cute in his little boy suffering for his dead brother, Allie, and cute in his tenderness for his sister, "old Phoebe." But we expect that boys of that age may be cute, that is, consciously appealing and consciously clever. To be these things is almost their only resource in a world where parents and schoolmasters have all the power and the experience. Cuteness, for an adolescent, is to turn the normal self-pity of children, which arises from their relative weakness, into a relative advantage *vis-a-vis* the adult world.[14]

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[12] Donald Barr, "Saints, Pilgrims and Artists," *The Commonweal*, LXVII (October 25, 1957), p. 89.

[13] Leslie Fiedler, *No! In Thunder* (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1960), p. 275.

[14] Alfred Kazin, "J. D. Salinger: Everybody's Favorite," *Atlantic*, CCVIII (August, 1961), p. 30.

Peter J. Seng takes a more moderate view of Holden. Explaining the novel as "the edited psychoanalysis of Holden Caulfield," Seng says that Holden is not held up as a model for imitation, is not a dissembling Machiavelli, but is a tragic figure and should not be opposed by those censors who see him as Salinger's martyred adolescent.

> It seems to me that if the Catcher in the Rye is viewed along the lines suggested above it is a moral novel in the fullest sense of that word. According to this interpretation Holden is not a mere victim of modern society, but is in some sense a tragic figure. His temporary mental breakdown is brought about by a flaw in his own character; a naive refusal to come to terms with the world in which he lives. To regard him, on the other hand, as a pure young man who is martyred in his unavailing struggle against a sordid world of adult phoniness, is to strip him of any real dignity. Such an interpretation makes the novel guilty of idle romanticism.[15]

Seng himself is a romantic indeed if he thinks that the censors might not object if both they and the teachers interpreted Holden as a "tragic figure," but he does throw light on the problem with his implication that Holden romanticized by the critics is as extreme as Holden condemned by the censors.

Although some say that the Salinger cult is slowly dying and Holden's representativeness as an adolescent is becoming more rapidly dated, the book retains its popularity and teachers will probably continue to teach Catcher in the Rye in the schools. Although it appears that acceptance of Catcher is growing, some teachers will probably have to defend Holden from censors who try to have him removed from the schools.

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[15] Peter J. Seng, "The Fallen Idol: The Immature World of Holden Caulfield," College English, XXIII (December, 1961), pp. 208-209.

"The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn": The Irreverent Rebel

Ever since Huck Finn was published, Huck Finn, like Holden Caulfield, has been expelled from many schools for being a disreputable character. Censors have felt that Huck, like Holden, might cause the young reader to act in undesirable ways, since, generally speaking, the censor does not like the way Huck acts very much. Much of the early censorship, in particular, was concerned with the character of Huck and the effect he might have on readers. Albert Bigelow Paine tells us that

> It was Huck Finn's morality that caused the books to be excluded from the Concord Library, and from other libraries here and there at a later day. The orthodox mental attitude of certain directors of juvenile literature could not condone Huck's looseness in the matter of statement and property rights, and in spite of New England traditions Massachusetts librarians did not take any too kindly to his uttered principle that, after thinking it over and taking due thought on the deadly sin of abolition, he had decided that he'd go to hell rather than give Jim over to slavery.[16]

When the Concord, Massachusetts Public Library excluded Huck in 1885, the Boston Transcript reported that the Library

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[16] Albert Bigelow Paine, Mark Twain: A Biography (4 vols; New York: Harper & Brothers, 1912), II, p. 797.

Committee believed the book was "rough, coarse and inelegant, dealing with a series of experiences not elevating, the whole book being more suited to the slums than to intelligent, respectable people."[17] Not only have censors implied that reading such a novel could make a good boy bad, but they have also believed that it can make a bad boy worse. After hearing what the Concord Library had done, the librarian of the New York State Reformatory was about to ban Huck Finn when he was convinced by a visiting Professor Sanborn that it might "go into your Reference Library, at least."[18] Calling the book "immoral and sacreligious," a Denver preacher had it removed from that city's library in 1902. The statement by the Omaha Public Library Board (which confused the book with Tom Sawyer) is very telling: "...it puts wrong ideas in youngsters' heads, teaching them to desire the life of a pirate rather than a sedate good citizen."[19] And the Brooklyn Public Library, when it banned Huck Finn from the Children's room in 1905 called it a "bad example for ingenuous youth."[20] To the librarian in Brooklyn who wrote telling him that Huck Finn was about to be removed from the Children's Department,

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[17] Boston Transcript, March 17, 1885; quoted in Walter Blair, Mark Twain & Huck Finn (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960), p. 3.

[18] Critic, VI (May 30, 1885), p. 265; quoted in Blair, p. 3.

[19] Quoted in Blair, p. 3.

[20] Ibid.

Twain satirically wrote the following:

> 21 Fifth Avenue
> November 21, 1905
>
> Dear Sir:
>
> I am greatly troubled by what you say. I wrote Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn for adults exclusively, and it always distresses me when I find that boys and girls have been allowed access to them. The mind that becomes soiled in youth can never again be washed clean; I know this by my own experience and to this day I cherish an unappeasable bitterness against the unfaithful guardians of my young life, who not only permitted but compelled me to read an unexpurgated Bible through before I was 15 years old. None can do that and ever draw a clean, sweet breath again this side of the grave. Ask that young lady (the censoress) -- she will tell you so.
>
> Most honestly do I wish I could say a softening word or two in defense of Huck's character, since you wish it, but really in my opinion it is no better than those of Solomon, David, Satan, and the rest of the sacred brotherhood.
>
> If there is an unexpurgated Bible in the Children's Department, won't you please help that young woman remove Huck and Tom from that questionable companionship?
>
> Sincerely yours,
>
> (Signed) S. L. Clemens
>
> I shall not show your letter to anyone -- it is safe with me.[21]

One of the earliest reviews of the book implied what it might do to youth who read it, calling the book a

> very refined and delicate piece of narration by Huck Finn, describing his venerable and dilapidated "pap" as afflicted with delirium tremens, rolling over and over, "kicking things every which way," and "saying there was devils ahold of him." This chapter is especially suited to amuse the children on long, rainy afternoons.[22]

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[21] Mark Twain, Mark Twain's Autobiography (2 vols; New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1924), II, p. 335.

[22] Life, V (February 26, 1885), p. 119.

The reviewer went on to show an incident which the reader could learn to copy from Huck. The book, he says, contains

> an elevating and laughable description of how Huck killed a pig, smeared its blood on an axe and mixed in a little of his own hair, and then ran off, setting up a job on the old man and the community, and leading them to believe him murdered. This little joke can be repeated by any smart boy for the amusement of his fond parents.[23]

Huck Finn has been a disreputable character to more than just a few of the censors, but his self-exile removes him enough from society that he can be excused more easily than can Holden Caulfield. Moreover, censors today can find more immediacy in Holden's irreverence and his entanglements with sex than they can with Huck's encounters with Fundamentalism and slavery. (And, as we shall see in Chapter IV, censors now find other more timely objections to Huck Finn than Huck's behavior.) Nevertheless, critic Leslie Fiedler takes a viewpoint which is further into the realm of the censor than even they themselves have dared to go. He says that our "classic literature" is a "literature of horror for boys," and that readers do not really realize it.

> Huckleberry Finn is only the supreme instance of a subterfuge typical of our classic novelists. To this very day it is heresy in some quarters to insist that this is not finally the jolliest, the cleanest of all books; Twain's ironical warning to significance hunters, posted just before the title page, is taken quite literally, and the irreverent critic who explicates the book's levels of terror and evasion is regarded as a busybody and scandalmonger.[24]

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[23] Ibid.

[24] Leslie Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel (New York: Criterion Books, 1960), pp. 29-30.

Fiedler goes on to say that Huck is a Good Bad Boy and that the book is an "astonishingly complicated novel, containing not one image of the boy, but a series of interlocking ones."[25] One image of the boy which Fiedler dwells on is that of a "boy-Ishmael."[26] Fiedler quotes from Tom Sawyer to describe Huck as the "juvenile pariah of the village . . . idle and lawless, and vulgar, and bad. . . . "[27]

> If Tom Sawyer was always a boy's book, even when Twain thought he was writing for adults, Huckleberry Finn is from the start, on one of its levels at least, not merely an adult but a subversive novel, as the Board of the Concord Public Library should have been congratulated for seeing.[28]

Although Fiedler agrees with the ways in which the censors see Huck, and does, in fact, go further than they themselves go; most of the other contemporary critics, as Fiedler himself has said, do not agree.

Both the critics and the censors are able to see Huck as a rebel. But for the most part, the critics, including Fiedler, do not condemn, but praise him for it. As Vernon L. Parrington says,

> The rebel Huck is no other than the rebel Mark Twain whose wrath was quick to flame up against the unrighteous customs of law and caste.... The one sacred duty laid on every rational

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[25] Ibid., p. 270.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid., p. 277.

[28] Ibid., p. 278.

> being is the duty of rebelling against sham -- to deny the divinity of clothes, to thrust out quack kings and priests and lords, to refuse a witless loyalty to things.[29]

Critic Robert Regan, being more interested in the character of Tom Sawyer than he is in the character of Huck Finn, sees Huck as something less than an active force in the novel. Regan says Huck is

> blind but all-seeing, passive but all-suffering. The protagonist's role is as out of character for Huck as the hero's. Although he sometimes finds active participation in the affairs of other people unavoidable (for example, when he must protect the Wilks girl or help Jim), he agonizes with himself over every decision to become involved. Huck's moral commitment is positive; but it is a positive commitment to disengagement.[30]

Regan believes that Huck's alienation from society may, in fact, make Huck an anti-hero, doing heroic things without realizing it, demonstrating that "heroism is possible without heroics."[31] Critic Warren French classified Holden Caulfield in terms of The Lonely Crowd as an "inner-directed personality" (see above) and this is much the way that Regan sees Huck. This is one viewpoint of Huck and Holden. If they are, for the most part, disengaged, they are more amoral than they are immoral as the censors and some of the critics believe, or super-moral, as some of the critics assert.

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[29] Vernon L. Parrington, Main Currents in American Thought (Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1930), p. 95.

[30] Robert Regan, Unpromising Heroes (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), pp. 155-156.

[31] Ibid., p. 150.

Lewis Leary also refuses to see Huck as either a rebellious youth or as a particularly moral hero. Calling the book "the honest observations of an attractive boy," he says that

> Huckleberry Finn's solution of the problem of freedom is direct and unworldly; having tested society, he will have none of it, for civilization finally makes culprits of all men. Huck is a simple boy, with little education and great confidence in omens. One measure of his character is the proneness to deceit, which though not always successful, is instinctive, as if it were a trait shared with wild things, relating him to nature, in opposition to the tradition-grounded, book-learning deceptions of Tom Sawyer.[32]

Huck can be seen, then, as being both removed from society and in some way opposed to it. As Leary suggests, Huck's opposition to society might be interpreted as a natural state. Some critics go even further and assign the role of the "noble savage" to Huck. Gladys Bellamy calls Huck "the natural man," while praising him for being so.

> The three figures, Tom, Huck, and Jim represent three gradations of thought and three levels of civilization, Tom, pretending so intensely that it becomes so, says we can't do it except as in the books. Is this what civilization really is -- merely a pretense according to a set pattern? Tom is on the highest level, in the sense of being most civilized; but he represents a mawkish, romantic, artificial civilization. Compared with him, Nigger Jim and Huck are primitives; and the closer Mark Twain gets to primitivism, the better his writing becomes. He shows us the African in Jim, imbuing him with a dark knowledge that

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[32] Lewis Leary, *Mark Twain* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1960), p. 29.

> lies in his blood and nerve ends. Huck Finn stands between these two; he is the "natural man," suggesting Walt Whitman's dream of the great American who should be simple and free. . . .[33]

Other critics, such as Gilbert M. Rubinstein, see Huck as a moral person, completely within the bounds of the Judaeo-Christian tradition.

> Huck Finn, though no church goer, is not a pagan; and the moral structure of the book is deeply moving, in the best Judaeo-Christian tradition.[34]

T. S. Eliot, who has written about his parents' keeping the book from him when he was a boy lest he should "acquire a premature taste for tobacco, and perhaps other habits of the hero of the story," points out both Huck's objectivity as well as the need for objectivity on the part of the reader.[35]

> Huck we do not look at -- we see the world through his eyes. . . Huck has not imagination, in the sense in which Tom has it: he has, instead, vision. He sees the real world; and he does not judge it -- he allows it to judge itself. ... Huck Finn is alone; there is no more solitary character in fiction. The fact that he has a father only emphasizes his loneliness; and he views his father with a terrifying detachment. So we come to see Huck himself in the end as one of the permanent symbolic figures of fiction; not unworthy to take a place with Ulysses, Faust, Don Quixote, Don Juan, Hamlet, and other great discoveries that man has made about himself.[36]

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[33] Gladys Carmen Bellamy, Mark Twain as a Literary Artist (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1950), pp. 339-340.

[34] Gilbert M. Rubenstein, "The Moral Structure of Huckleberry Finn," College English, XVIII (November, 1956), p. 72.

[35] T. S. Eliot,"Introduction"to Huckleberry Finn (London: The Cresset Press, 1950), p. vii.

[36] Ibid., pp. viii-ix.

Eliot is not greatly concerned whether or not the character is moral; what he is concerned about is the portrayal of the character and its veracity. Lauriat Lane says, "Huck, like so many other great heroes of fiction -- Candide, Tom Jones, Stephen Dedalus, to mention only a few -- goes forth into life that he may learn."[37] Moreover, Lane sees Huck as an epic hero.

> The epic hero is usually an embodiment of some virtue or virtues valued highly by the society from which he has sprung. Huck has many such virtues. He holds a vast store of practical knowledge which makes itself felt everywhere in the story. He knows the river and how to deal with it; and he knows mankind and how to deal with it. And he has the supreme American virtue of never being at a loss for words. In fact, Huck, though he still keeps some of the innocence and naivete of youth, has much in common with one of the greatest epic heroes, Odysseus, the practical man.[38]

The virtues which might have made Huck a hero to his Missouri society at the time or which might make him a hero to Lane, are not those virtues which the censors would probably value. Huck's practical knowledge is just that kind of knowledge which most censors seem to try to keep from children. Huck does know the baser sides of mankind, or at least he does come into contact with them. And the censors are particularly sensitive to that kind of knowledge.

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[37] Lauriat Lane, "Why Huckleberry Finn is a Great World Novel," College English, XVII (October, 1955), p. 2.

[38] Ibid., p. 3.

Furthermore, as pointed out in Chapter II, the words for which he is never at a loss, are not the words the censors would have the young readers know or use. If Huck would be seen as a hero by the censors, it would have to be on grounds other than those used by Lane.

Lionel Trilling has also spoken of Huck in heroic terms, calling him a moral person; he sees Huck's morality as the boy following his own conscience and not the dictates of society. Trilling has called Huck and Jim on the raft a "community of saints," but, again, they are not the kind of saints the censors would worship. Trilling has pointed out that

> Huckleberry Finn was once barred from certain libraries and schools for its alleged subversion of morality. The authorities had in mind the book's endemic lying, the petty thefts, the denigrations of respectability and religion, the bad language and the bad grammar. We smile at that excessive care, yet in point of fact Huckleberry Finn is indeed a subversive book -- no one who reads thoughtfully the dialectic of Huck's great moral crisis will ever again be wholly able to accept without question and some irony the assumptions of the respectable morality by which he lives, nor will ever again be certain that what he considers the clear dictates of moral reason are not merely the engrained customary beliefs of his time and place.[39]

Trilling asserts that Huck does believe in something other than his own conscience, that he is the servant of the river-god and that much of his love for the river is associated with the primitive "community of saints," Jim and Huck. Trilling shares much in common with the censors when he calls the book "subversive," but he, unlike the censors, does not condemn it for being so. Where censors would probably want young readers to accept "respectable" morality, Trilling implies that the perceptive reader of Huck Finn will instead question and see some irony in his own "engrained customary beliefs," a thing which Trilling presumably approves.

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[39] Lionel Trilling, "Introduction" to Huckleberry Finn (Rinehart Editions; New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1948), pp. xi, xiii.

The censors cited usually have seen Huck as an undesirable character, as one who is in conflict with the society around him. They are not alone in these beliefs, however. Although there is great latitude in the critics' observations of Huck, some do agree with the censors. But even those who do agree with the censors that Huck is a rebel do not fear the effect he might have on adolescent readers. Most contemporary critics (although they may not explicitly say so), from those who see Huck as an innocent to those who see him as an epic hero, would probably favor his presence in schools.

"The Grapes of Wrath": The Degenerate and Debased

The censors, of course, could find a wealth of sex and violence in The Grapes of Wrath about which to protest. But the most vociferous attacks have been made almost completely in self-defense by Oklahomans and Californians. Censors in Oklahoma have complained about the portrayal of Okies in the novel. Mr. W. W. Harrison, of the Oklahoma City Times, who also commented on the language in Grapes (Chapter II), stated that "any reader who has his roots planted in the red soil will boil with indignation over the bedraggled, bestial characters that will give the ignorant east convincing ideas of the people of the southwest. . . ."[40] Some censors find the actions which Steinbeck portrays somewhat embarrassing. They are not afraid, necessarily, that youthful readers will mimic the actions of the book, as are most of the censors of Catcher. In particular, the Oklahoma responses to the book showed a reluctance to have readers gain the "wrong ideas" about residents of the southwest. In his speech to Congress damning the book, the Hon. Lyle Boren of Oklahoma told his audience:

> I would have you know that there is not a tenant farmer in Oklahoma that Oklahoma need to apologize for. I want to declare to my nation and to the world that I am proud of my tenant-farmer heritage, and I would to Almighty God that all citizens of America could be as clean and noble and fine as the Oklahomans that Steinbeck labeled "Okies."[41]

Nor were Californians happy about the depiction of farming and living conditions and people responsible for these conditions in their state. In the Pacific Rural Press of the Associated Farmers, John E. Pickett condemned Steinbeck because Steinbeck "peeks into the privies of life."[42] The Citizens

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[40] Mr. W. W. Harrison, quoted in Shockley, "Reception," p. 354.

[41] Lyle Boren, Congressman from Oklahoma, The Congressional Record, quoted in French, Companion, p. 126.

[42] Quoted by Samuel Sillen, "Censoring The Grapes of Wrath," New Masses, XXXII (September 12, 1939), p. 24.

Association of Bakersfield answered Steinbeck in a pamphlet entitled "California Citizens Association Report."

> The author, John Steinbeck, in his novel, Grapes of Wrath, did great injustice both to Californians and to the migrants themselves. These hapless people are not moral and mental degenerates as he pictures them, but victims of desperate conditions -- conditions which can bring to California the same tragedy that drove them from their home states.
>
> A deep-set prejudice seems to be the only explanation for the involving of the American Legion in a fictionally-created harassment of these people.
>
> The California Citizens Assocation, made up of various organizations, presented to the Congress petitions signed by hundreds of thousands of people, directing the attention of the government to the fact that no further migration could be endured by the people of California. The record of the California Citizens Association has been one of sympathy for these people, but one that must now be tempered by a deep desire to maintain our standard of living and by the natural law of self-preservation.[43]

Although the California Citizens Association believed that the Okies Steinbeck drew were degenerate while the real Okies were not, they still did not want too many of the real Okies in their state.

A preacher in Ardmore, Oklahoma was reported to have said that "the sexual roles that the author makes the preacher and young woman play is so vile and misrepresentative of them as a whole that all readers should revolt at the debasement the author makes of them."[44] When the book was banned in Kansas City, one of the censors objected to the "portrayal of women living like cattle in a shed," pointing particularly to the last scene which she said, "portrays life in such a bestial way."[45]

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[43] "California Citizens Report," reprinted in Marshall V. Hartranft, Grapes of Gladness (Los Angeles: De Vorss, 1939), p. 125.

[44] The Rev. Lee Rector, quoted in Shockley, "Reception," p. 127.

The general assumption of those who have been quoted here is that the characters Steinbeck draws are ignoble and low; that by reading about these characters, one might be persuaded to think poorly of Okies, Californians, preachers, women, and others. The censors, here, are talking about the effect of reading upon attitudes, which is somewhat different from the effect of reading upon behavior. (See Appendix A). The thesis, however, will not go into the subtle psychological or philosophical differences between the two effects since neither censors nor critics in their assumptions really try to differentiate fully between the two. The concern in this thesis is the censors' literal interpretation which stresses only the negative aspects of the character.

Critics may not all agree on the status of Steinbeck's people, but most of them do not feel that they are degenerate. There is a wide range of opinion on the characters, going from those who believe that they are unworthy of a reader's attention, unreal, morally evil, or poorly created -- to those who see them as only human -- to those who assign to them a type of nobility.

Closest to the opinions of the censors are those critics who talk of the animalistic attributes of Steinbeck's characters. John S. Kennedy, for instance, has said,

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[45] Sillen, p. 23.

> Man is, of course, an animal. But he is an animal with a difference. He is a rational animal, a moral animal. Steinbeck seems to argue to man's rationality when he says, in The Grapes of Wrath, "Fear the time when Manself will not suffer and die for a concept; for this one quality is the foundation of Manself." And yet he incessantly presents man as a creature, indeed a captive, of instincts and appetites only, blindly desiring and striving, not reasoning, judging, choosing but automatically responding to impulses and attractions.[46]

Kennedy implies that Grapes suffers because Steinbeck overemphasizes man as irrational and instinctive. Kennedy, like the censors, accuses Steinbeck of picturing the Joads as degenerates.[47]

Almost in answer to the censors and to Kennedy is Lincoln R. Gibbs who justifies Steinbeck's going beyond the pale of respectability.

> On the score of morality it is all to the good that the novelist penetrate to the heart of his characters, especially if his characters are beyond the respectable pale. Good people express loathing for the persons in Of Mice and Men and The Grapes of Wrath. Why should one associate with such people in books, since one avoids them in life? To waive the question whether it is right utterly to shun the company of immoral persons, one may reply that fiction is useful largely as a means of extending one's knowledge of men beyond the possible or expedient range of experience. It is unwise for most people to be among tigers in the jungle; caged in a

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[46] John S. Kennedy, John Steinbeck: Life Affirmed and Dissolved, in Harold C. Gardiner (ed.), Fifty Years of the American Novel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), p. 228.

[47] Ibid., p. 235.

> zoo the animals may be admired and studied in safety. The art of fiction is an animal cage -- and something more, to be sure: it permits an intimate study of evil beasts.[48]

Gibbs agrees with the censors that the Joads might be "immoral," but his conclusions about their place in literature is exactly the opposite of those of the censors.

Edmund Wilson, on the other hand, recognizes animalistic tendencies in Steinbeck's characters, but he contends not that the Joads lack dignity, but that they lack depth as characters in the novel and thus would not "extend one's knowledge of men."

> The characters of The Grapes of Wrath are animated and put through their paces rather than brought to life; they are like excellent character actors giving very conscientious performances in a fairly well-written play. Their dialect is well done, but they talk stagily; and, in spite of Mr. Steinbeck's attempts to make them figure as heroic human symbols, you cannot help feeling that they, too, do not quite exist seriously for him as people. It is as if human sentiments and speeches had been assigned to a flock of lemmings on their way to throw themselves into the sea.[49]

Most of the critics, however, have praised Steinbeck for his characters. Like the censors and Kennedy, they may have found them undignified and crude, but realistic and well-drawn characters in a novel. Joseph Warren Beach says the Okies

> represent a level, material and social, on which the reader has never existed even for a day. They have lived for generations completely deprived of luxuries and refinements which in the life he has

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[48] Lincoln R. Gibbs, "John Steinbeck: Moralist," The Antioch Review,II(Summer,1942)p.185.

[49] Edmund Wilson, The Boys in the Back Room: Some Notes on California Novelists (San Francisco: The Colt Press, 1941), p. 49.

> —known are taken for granted as primary conditions of civilization.
>
> And yet they are not savages. They are self-respecting men and women with a traditional set of standards and proprieties and rules of conduct which they never think of violating. Beset with innumerable difficulties, cut off from their family moorings, they are confronted with situations of great delicacy, with nice problems in ethics and family policy to be resolved. Decisions are taken after informal discussions in the family council organized on ancient tribal lines . . . .
>
> And so the Joads and the Okies take their place with Don Quixote, with Dr. Faustus, with Galsworthy's Forsytes and Lewis' Babbitt, in the world's gallery of symbolic characters, the representative tapestry of the creative imagination.[50]

Beach, like most of the critics, does not try to assess the Joads as if they were real people; he does not try to judge their actions as if they were real actions. Furthermore, he sees the Joads as realistically created fictions, as mirrors to the truth of what does exist, not that which exists itself.

Since most of the critics consider the characters only as symbolic representations, they are not bothered by what many of the censors see as sordidness. Most critics imply in their remarks an understanding of the author's rationale for verisimilitude and even overstatement in the novel. The Joads must seem to be typical, but they must also be more than typical. To most critics they are complex characters, undergoing change throughout the novel, with many facets to them. If they are to serve the function Steinbeck wishes them to serve, many critics feel that the author cannot ignore their defects and the attributes of the class from which they come.

To the critics and to most readers, Grapes is a first introduction to the life of the Okies. To most censors, however, the Joads remind of things they would perhaps wish ignored or forgotten.

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[50] Beach, American Fiction, p. 264.

Warren French says that the Joads are "not lovable and longsuffering; and Steinbeck does not argue that they are virtuous, but simply that they are human,"[51] and that those who oppress them in the novel fail to recognize their humanness. French says Steinbeck is not blind to their defects, that Steinbeck writes about "thoughtless, impetuous, suspicious, ignorant people."[52] French argues that the Joads have to learn to stop thinking of themselves as a separate, isolated unit, the "fambly," and realize that they are a part of humanity. This is what Tom finally realizes and what Casy has been saying throughout the novel. The Joads must learn to adapt themselves to new conditions, they too must change, as well as their surroundings.

The final scene of the novel, French believes, is an allegory of universal brotherhood of which the family is now capable. He does not see them as degenerates as do the censors, nor even as "thoughtless or ignorant" any longer.

> Ma's unstated suggestion that Rosasharn give her milk to the starving man is only carrying into practice the idea that "worse off we get, the more we gort to do." Having come to the barn with almost nothing, the family, through Rosasharn, gives the one thing -- and one of the most intimate things it

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[51] Warren French, John Steinbeck (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1961), p. 99.

[52] *Ibid.*, p. 98.

> has to offer. The tableau does not halt an unfinished story; it marks the end of the story Steinbeck had to tell about the Joads. Their education is completed. They have triumphed over familial prejudices. What happens to them now depends upon the ability of the rest of society to learn the same lesson they have already learned.[53]

This is, of course, only one viewpoint of the final scene. Rose of Sharon's act could be construed by the censors as objectionable. As French says,

> Although it would seem that only the prurient, who have missed the whole point that the plight of the migrants is really desperate, could object to accepting this poignant scene literally, this tableau has been a bone of contention since the novel appeared.[54]

Censors might find prurience in Rose of Sharon's act, but most critics do not. Some have found it aesthetically pleasing within the framework of the novel. Edwin Burgum calls it out of place, a "meretricious desire to italicize the action."[55]

Bernard De Voto claims that the ending is "symbolism gone sentimental."[56] On the other hand, some critics have drawn very specific parallels between the last scene and the Bible, as critics did with Steinbeck's language and the language of the Bible. Both Peter Lisca and Martin Staples Shockley have likened Rose of Sharon's act to the Eucharist.[57] Peter Lisca says,

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[53] Ibid., p. 107.

[54] Ibid., p. 100.

[55] Edwin Barry Burgum, The Novel and the World's Dilemma (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 283.

[56] Bernard De Voto, review of Grapes of Wrath, in The New Yorker, quoted in French, Steinbeck, p. 100.

> Rosasharn's giving of new life to the old man is another reference to the orthodox interpretation of Canticles:"I [Christ] am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys" (2:1); and to the Gospels: "Take, eat; this is My body."[58]

Shockley also sees something other than debasement in the final scenes of the novel. He compares the Joads to the Israelites.[59]

> The meaning of this incident, Steinbeck's final paragraph, is clear in terms of Christian symbolism. And this is the supreme symbol of the Christian religion, commemorated by Protestants in the Communion, by Catholics in the Mass. Rosasharn gives what Christ gave, what we receive in memory of Him. The ultimate mystery of the Christian religion is realized as Rosasharn "looked up and across the barn, and her lips came together and smiled mysteriously." She smiles mysteriously because what has been mystery is now knowledge. This is my body, says Rosasharn, and becomes the Resurrection and the life.[60]

Another example of Christian symbolism in the book which most critics but not censors see is the Rev. Jim Casy. Earlier in this chapter, for example, we saw a preacher objected to Steinbeck's characterization of a minister who had taken up the ways of sin. Some of the critics have seen Casy as a

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[57] Lisca, Wide World, p. 170; Shockley, "Christian Symbolism," p. 89; Joseph Fontenrose, John Steinbeck: An Introduction and Interpretation (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1963), p. 78.

[58] Lisca, p. 170.

[59] Shockley, "Christian Symbolism," p. 87.

[60] Ibid., p. 89.

Christ figure.[61] Martin Staples Shockley says that

> Like Jesus, Jim has rejected an old religion and is in process of replacing it with a new gospel. In the introductory scene with Tom Joad, Tom and Jim recall the old days when Casy preached the old religion, expounding the old concept of sin and guilt. Now, however, Casy explains his rejection of a religion through which he saw himself as wicked and depraved because of the satisfaction of natural human desires. The old Adam of the fall is about to be exorcised through the new dispensation.
>
> It should not be necessary to point out that Jim Casy's religion is innocent of Paulism, of Catholicism, of Puritanism. He is identified simply and directly with Christ, and his words paraphrase the words of Jesus, who said, 'God is love,' and 'A new commandment give I unto you: that ye love one another.'[62]

Most censors, however, do not identify Jim Casy with Jesus Christ. Even if the censors would accept Casy's sexuality and his use of profanity, would they want their children to read about someone who rejects Calvinism? Would they, in fact, even if they believed that Casy is a Christ figure, want their children to read about him? Would they reject him because he is identified only with Christ and not with Paulism, Catholicism, or Puritanism?

Like Holden, Casy is somewhat of a non-conformist, particularly for a 1930's minister of God. Like Huck, Casy worries about the welfare of others even when to do so is in contention with the mores of the society which surrounds him. The Joads,

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[61] Peter Lisca sees Jim as an Emerson-figure. "For like Emerson, Casy discovers his Oversoul through intuition and rejects his congregation in order to preach to the world." Lisca, p. 175.

[62] Shockley, "Christian Symbolism," pp. 87-88.

Casy and other characters in The Grapes of Wrath exhibit traits such as sexuality and violence which many censors do not want adolescent readers to see. Some censors have implied that the reason is that the young will copy and learn from such models, but, in the case of The Grapes of Wrath, censors have been more concerned that the models are unfair to the reality of what Okies and preachers were really like.

Summary

Basically, the censors tend to see characters in a novel as if they were real persons; they tend to see the actions performed by these characters as if they were real actions. By doing so, some go on to assume that anti-social behavior in the novels, particularly overt sex and violence, could cause the adolescent reader to act in the same ways as do the characters in the books. Other censors are more concerned that certain characters act totally degenerate. They fear that these actions will be seen as the actions of all Okies.

What has been of particular interest in the censors' objections to the characters and actions of The Grapes of Wrath, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn and The Catcher in the Rye is not only the middle ground where the censors and critics have agreed on some points, but the extremes taken by representatives of both groups. Where some censors have seen Holden Caulfield, Huck Finn, the Joads and Jim Casy as totally degenerate and evil persons, some critics see the same characters as innocents or even as saints.

Although the critics at times agree with the censors about the moral and ethical qualities of certain characters, most of them do not call for the banning of a book when they see characters as having some immoral or degenerate attributes. Usually the critic sees the character as a created fiction and evaluates him in terms of how well-drawn, realistic, and consistent he is. But as long as censors view characters in novels as Caroline Gordon's friend viewed Faulkner's characters, they will continue to try and keep certain novels out of the schools.

CHAPTER IV

THE SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND RACIAL VIEWS OF THE AUTHOR: CENSORS' AND CRITICS' VIEWPOINTS

"Why should the schools," say the censors, "make our children read literature which is critical of American society?" "Why should we let them read the novels of John Hersey, a Russian?" "Why should we let our children read the words of George Orwell, Richard Wright, J. D. Salinger and other cynics and malcontents?" The detection of irreverence for God or country disqualifies many books for the censors. They often see the author criticizing some aspect of society which they do not believe should be questioned in the schools and call for the removal of the book. The social, political, or racial attitudes the censor objects to in the novel largely depend upon his own attitudes. The censors' objections to these aspects of the novel frequently take on the character of ax-grinding.[1]

As we have seen in Chapter I, patriotic organizations such as the Daughters of the American Revolution and the

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[1] See Mary Anne Raywid, The Ax-Grinders (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1962).

American Legion are particularly alert to what their ally, E. Merrill Root, has called "brainwashing in the high schools." The Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith surveys textbooks, particularly those in social studies, periodically publishing its Treatment of Minorities in Secondary School Textbooks. Representatives of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People have objected to the teaching of The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn in the secondary schools; officials of the Anti-Defamation League have spoken out against the use of Oliver Twist and The Merchant of Venice. America's Future watches for left-wing tendencies in textbooks while the Citizens for Decent Literature sees itself as guarding the morality of youth.

Religious and patriotic groups, as well as both politically conservative and politically liberal groups have attacked the attitudes of authors towards society. The objections ,however,do not always originate from such a group. Vigilante committees form just for the occasion of a banning. Seemingly independent individual censors also often make their objections heard. Although many censors themselves know of difficulties in our society, they do not want adolescents to study controversial topics in their study of literature. The censor often sees the child as an innocent, as "the hope of our country" and does not want this hope to be disillusioned. Censors typically seem to feel that novels read in the schools should affirm, not question the status quo (or what they see as the status quo) of our society. The sanctity of religion, marriage, and patriotism, if the subject of novels at all, should be upheld, especially in the schools.

The censor might, in fact, see some criticism on the part of the author where little or no social criticism actually exists. Many censors equate attitudes they think they see expressed in the novel with the actual attitudes of the author. Because censors often take the novels so literally and because they become emotionally involved in attitudes they find objectionable, literary devices such as satire and irony might be lost upon them. For example, Mark Twain exaggerates many foibles of human nature in order to make them seem absurd, but the censors' approach might miss this satire and see only an attack or social cynicism on the part of the author.

"The Catcher in the Rye":Criticism of American Society

Often censors object to The Catcher in the Rye because of what they see as J. D. Salinger's criticism of American society. In the Louisville, Kentucky,controversy mentioned earlier, a Baptist minister commented to his congregation:

> To deprive a child of such literature as "Catcher in the Rye" however, will be seen as an encroachment on academic and personal freedom. This in spite of the fact that it might later cause a warped and twisted outlook on life [sic].[2]

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[2] The Rev. John E. Carter, "From the Pastor's Study," Okolona Baptist Church Bulletin, February 21, 1960. Quoted in Fienc, The Controversy, p. 33.

One of the Temple City, California, censors of Catcher said that she failed to see why educators would want to teach any books that need defending.

> A sound principle with regard to books for the young must be: Only the best is good enough. For there is an immense idealism hidden beneath the blunt or unposed concern for youth. When literary creations bring into focus abundant examples of immorality, perversion, varied crimes; literary creations ripping away at God-created institutions of family, society, government; literary creations ranging through the cycle of all known moral and intellectual disorder, then the authors of such literary creations have adopted a criminal approach to their responsibilities as authors.[3]

The problem, of course, is when do examples of immorality, perversion, crime and disorder become abundant? Is it the responsibility of the novelist to build up, or it is to question the "immense idealism" of youth? As we see, most censors believe the former; many critics believe the latter. Most censors assume that the author should present the pleasant side of life and speak in moral aphorisms. They want to keep the adolescent from knowledge of taboo language, emotionally sick people, and inhumanity. For example, a spokesman for censors of Catcher in California protested against

> the many blasphemies, unpatriotic attitudes, references to prostitution and sexual affairs. There are continuous slurs with a downgrading of our home life, teaching profession, religion and so forth.[4]

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[3] Mrs. Crippen, quoted by Kate Sexton in the Pasadena Star-News, February 7, 1962. Reprinted in Laser, Marvin and Fruman, Norman (eds.), A Sourcebook on The Catcher in the Rye (New York: Odyssey Press, 1963), p. 126.

[4] Mr. De Mille, ibid.

In the Edgerton, Wisconsin, feud, a Catholic pastor warned his parishioners not to read Catcher because it was "morally harmful." Instead, he advised that students should read "great literature." He defined "great literature" as books in agreement with his personal religious ethic.[5] The Texan father cited earlier who believed that "by assigning this book, the University of Texas is corrupting the moral fibers of youth," knew exactly where to put blame for Salinger's liberal use of social criticism.

> While the book is not a hard-core Communist-type book, it encourages a lessing of spiritual values which in turn leads to Communism.[6]

Literature must praise, not blame; honor, not find fault. Some censors sincerely believe that Twain, Salinger, Steinbeck, and other authors are trying to tear apart society. They see the socially critical novelist as an iconoclast breeding other iconoclasts who will use taboo language, act abnormally, and abuse the sacred institutions of American society.

At least one critic of Catcher shares the censors' fears for the safety of society. Robert O. Bowen states directly what most critics imply in their statements and even goes so far as to catalogue what he calls "Salinger's reducing the vision of an ideal through pejorative or disgusting details".[7] Bowen sees Salinger as indicting

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[5] Quoted in Ambling, Capital Times.

[6] Hatten, Houston Post, quoted in Fiene, The Controversy, p. 47.

[7] Bowen, p. 53.

Christianity, American Folk Heroes, American History, Educational Institutions, and Catholicism. Bowen's final paragraphs illustrate the censors' warnings about a book which they believe to be so critical of society.

> Far from being a kind and gentle and mature and objective and above all wise book, The Catcher in the Rye, like all of Salinger's fiction, is catty and snide and bigotted in the most thorough sense. It is crassly caste-conscious as the treatment of cabbies and elevator operators witnesses; it is religiously bigotted as the treatment of Catholics and the Salvation Army witnesses; it is vehemently anti-Army and even anti-American in equating the American military with the Nazi military. All of these things are the reasons for the book's success, for its success lies in its utility as propaganda.
>
> Let those of us who are Christian and who love life lay this book aside as a weapon of the enemy, and let those who wish it so read it. But let us be honest in this and charge bigotry where it stands. Feeding spite is no charity simply because the spite is against the faith and hope of a Christian vision of life.[8]

Bowen considers Salinger anti-Christian and anti-American, seeing Catcher as propaganda for the forces of evil. The assumptions of many censors and critic Bowen seem to run something like this: Fiction taught in the high school and college should point out only the ideal vision of life.[9] Fiction should teach a lesson to the reader in a positive way. J. D. Salinger, in Catcher, shows some of the uglier sides of American life. He talks about prostitutes and sex. He criticizes American education and the Christian religion. The Texas father even goes further and assumes that since the main character of Catcher finds fault with us, and therefore Salinger does also, both (or just Salinger suffices) must be against America and the Christian way of life. So Salinger must be at least a fellow traveler, if not a card-carrying Communist. The adolescent reader of Catcher might become, like Salinger, anti-American. To prevent this, Catcher should be banned from the schools.

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[8] Ibid., p. 60.

[9] This assumption is part of the general assumption of many that the function of the schools in general is political and social acculturation.

Most of the critics, on the other hand, greatly favor Holden's dissatisfaction with society. They do not fear that reading Salinger will condition the adolescent reader to engage actively in revolt. By exhibiting social problems, they believe, Salinger can make the teenage aware that difficulties exist in our society, and that all is not perfect. Most critics agree that the sensitive adolescent reader may be influenced by Catcher, but they do not fear the effect of the book, nor do they see it as dangerous to society nor as a Communist plot. Critic David Leitch rebuffs those who might fear a teenage Holden Caulfield-led revolution.

> Associate members of Salinger's club, clasping memories of childhood to them as they reluctantly join the adult world, are unlikely to parade their dissatisfaction. Their world is one of dreams and they will take refuge in it, secretly. While the beats express their revolt dramatically, so that all the squares in the world can see, the whimsical rebels for whom Salinger writes will be content to live theirs in a mental world of escape and disaffiliation. The people who

> find in Holden Caulfield, and to a lesser extent in James Dean, an expression of their most fundamental attitudes are more complicated and less pliable than advertising copywriters and members of government committees on youth like to think. They even seem to want different things. Recruits to the ranks of the disaffiliated, they regard society from a safe distance, convinced of one thing at least. For them it has nothing to offer.[10]

Leitch has the company of critics George Steiner and Michael Walzer in his assumption that the adolescent might be moved by Salinger, but only to disaffiliation. George Steiner, while rallying together the anti-Salinger forces, talks of apathy, not anti-social behavior as do the censors.

> Salinger flatters the very ignorance and normal shallowness of his young readers. He suggests to them that formal ignorance, political apathy and a vague *tristess* are positive virtues.[11]

So, not even the most vehement anti-Salinger critics, except of course Bowen, suggest nor state that Salinger's novel is propaganda in any form. At least one critic criticizes Salinger because of Holden's restraints. Michael Walzer states that:

> When the earnest and uncertain young men identify with Holden Caulfield, they are expressing a deeply felt discontent devoid of all appetite for adult satisfaction. It seems on the one hand to lack purpose and on the other hand to be free from all anxiety about purposelessness. It lacks, above all, just that moral irascibility which was once thought the truest sign of youth. This vague

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[10] David Leitch, "The Salinger Myth," *Twentieth Century* (London) CLXVIII (November,1960), p. 435.

[11] George Steiner, "The Salinger Industry," *The Nation* CLXXXIX (November 14, 1959), p. 362.

> rebelliousness is Salinger's material -- what he truly expresses and badly exploits. He cultivates a sense for its style, and he adds to its gentle ineptitude an engaging piety, at once sentimental and exotic. He does not, of course, suggest any actual confrontation between the discontented and the world of their discontents.[12]

In comparison with Frank Norris, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and some of the proletarian novelists of the twenties, Salinger's dissatisfaction is only slightly noticed by the critics. Many of the critics do recognize Salinger's basic criticisms of society, but most see his criticisms not only as socially justified, but as artistically well presented. As we shall see, Salinger's world is not the problem world of Steinbeck, nor is it the political world of Orwell.

The main difference between the censors' and critics' reaction to the social criticism of Salinger is that the critics do not fear it will condition the adolescent reader to serve the forces of evil. If, as the critics seem to believe, it is the artist's function to present a segment of reality as he sees it, even those critics who do not agree with Salinger's criticisms would not deny his right to criticize. But censors (and at least one critic) have attacked Salinger's right to criticize and have advocated that the novel be removed from the schools.

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[12] Michael Walzer, "In Place of a Hero," Dissent VII (Spring, 1960), p. 157.

"The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn": Racial Attitudes

In previous chapters we have discussed the protests of censors against Mark Twain's language and the actions of his main characters; in this chapter we are concerned with censors' objections to what they see as Twain's attitude toward society. The major source of friction we shall deal with here is the author's treatment of the Negro in the novel. The protests against what the censors see "nigger Jim" as standing for have come, in part, from sources which are usually not associated with censorship in the minds of most people. (See however, Chapter I.)

The New York City banning in 1957, for example, began with a complaint filed with the city's board of education by a member of the Brooklyn Branch of the NAACP.[13] The NAACP has denied any official protest against this book, but one officer declared that his organization strongly objected to the "racial slurs" and "belittling racial descriptions" in the work by Twain. Another NAACP official is reported to have said, "We don't like the role of censor, but we feel that some of the literature can be damaging to the Negro child and to the white child to the extent it gives a false impression of the Negro."[14]

Some Negro censors do not seem to want the student to come into contact with portrayals of the Negro which they consider degrading. The censors see Jim as a stereotype of the happy, ignorant "darkie" and they object to him on those grounds just as much as they object to "Step-and-Fetch-It" in the movies. They do not object to Jim here as a person, nor even as a character in a novel, but rather, they object to what he represents. Today especially there is more and more pressure to present the Negro in literature read in the schools in as favorable a light as possible. Many believe that portrayals of Negroes as slaves and as uneducated laborers will reinforce or cause prejudice on the part of the white student and will hamper the self-image of the Negro student.[15]

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[13] Nelson and Roberts, p. 170.

[14] Ibid.

Some Negroes resent the patronizing attitude often taken by white writers. Like the censors, Negro novelist and critic Ralph Ellison notes the "minstrel" stereotype of Jim. Ellison is concerned with what he sees as a friendly rub on the Negro's head by Twain.

> Writing at a time when the blackfaced minstrel was still popular, and shortly after a war which left even the abolitionists weary of those problems associated with the Negro, Twain fitted Jim into the outlines of the minstrel tradition, and it is from behind this stereotype mask that we see Jim's dignity and human capacity -- and Twain's complexity -- emerge. Yet it is his source in this same tradition which creates that ambivalence between his identification as an adult and parent and his 'boyish'

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[15] The possibility that this might happen must not be discredited. Much depends upon the books that are used, the age of the students, and the attitude of the teachers using them. For an excellent discussion of attitudes toward Negroes in texts, see Jonathan Kozol, Death at an Early Age (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, to be published Fall, 1967).

> naivete, and which by contrast, makes Huck, with his street-sparrow sophistication, seem more adult . . . Jim's friendship for Huck comes across as that of a boy for another boy rather than as the friendship of an adult for a junior; thus there is implicit in it not only a violation of the manner sanctioned by society for relations between Negroes and whites, there is a violation of our conception of adult maleness.[16]

Ellison, unlike many censors, does not call for the removal of the book even though he sees Twain's fitting Jim into the minstrel tradition. He acknowledges rather that Jim still is given some dignity and human capacity. Another critic and novelist, Theodore Dreiser, also noted the stereotypical qualities of Jim, saying that the best Twain

> did for the Negro at any time was to set against Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom, the more or less Sambo portrait of the Negro Jim who, with Huckleberry Finn, occupied the raft that was the stage of that masterly record of youthful life, Huckleberry Finn.[17]

Critic Leo Marx argues that the ending of the novel deprives Jim of any integrity he might have demonstrated earlier.

> On the raft he was an individual, man enough to denounce Huck when Huck made him the victim of a practical joke. In the closing episode, however, we lost sight of Jim in the maze of farcical invention. He ceases to be a man. He allows Huck and "Mars Tom" to fill his hut with rats and snakes. "And every time a rat bit Jim he would get up and write a line in his journal whilst the ink was fresh." This creature who bleeds ink and feels no pain is something less than human. He has been made

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[16] Ralph Ellison, "The Negro Writer in America: An Exchange," Partisan Review, XXV (Spring, 1958), pp. 215-216.

[17] Theodore Dreiser, "Mark the Double Twain," English Journal, XXIV (October, 1935), p. 622.

> over in the image of a flat stereotype: the submissive stage-Negro. These antics divest Jim, as well as Huck, of much of his dignity and individuality.[18]

Marx may even agree that the Negro might be offended by the final portrait of Jim, but unlike the censor, Marx never implies nor states that the novel should not be read because of this. And like most of the other critics, even Marx sees that Jim demonstrates nobility during the course of the novel.

Most of the critics, however, do not see Jim as a stereotype. Daniel G. Hoffman says that Jim only begins as a stereotype and that he emerges from it in the course of the novel. "Jim plays the comic role in slavery, when he bears the status society or Tom imposes upon him; not when he lives in his intrinsic human dignity, alone on the raft with Huck."[19] Hoffman goes on to assert that Twain's attitude towards Jim was as positive an attitude as Twain was capable of presenting.

> If Jim emerges from the degradation of slavery to become as much a man as Mark Twain could make him be, we must remember that Jim's growth marks a progress in Twain's spiritual maturity too. "In my school days I had no aversion to slavery. I was not aware that there was anything wrong with it. No one arraigned it in my hearing . . . the local pulpit taught us that God approved,it, that it was a holy thing." (Mark Twain's Autobiography, ed. Albert Bigelow Paine [New York, 1924], p. 101.) In 1855 Sam Clemens wrote home to his mother that

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[18] Leo Marx, "Mr. Eliot, Mr. Trilling, and Huckleberry Finn," The American Scholar, XXII (Autumn, 1953),pp. 429-430.

[19] Daniel G. Hoffman, Form and Fable in American Fiction (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 337.

> a nigger had a better chance than a white man of getting ahead in New York. Mark Twain began with all the stereotypes of racial character in his mind, the stereotypes that he as well as Jim outgrows.[20]

If Jim does not represent a stereotype, if he is, as another critic, James Farrell, insists, " . . . a man with dignity, loyalty, and courage,"[21] then is there something inappropriate about the response of the censors to him? The critic Chadwick Hansen summarizes five aspects he finds in the character of Jim.

> Jim is, in part, the comic stage Negro who can be made the butt of Tom's childish humor. But he is also a second Negro type, Mr. Bones, whose cleverness enables him to turn the jokes back on the Interlocutor. He is also a third Negro type, the kindly old colored Mammy, the protector of the white child. He is a fourth type, the sentimental family man who weeps for the suffering of his own child. And he is a fifth type, man in the abstract, natural man, if you wish -- with the reasoning power, the dignity, and the nobility that belong to that high abstraction.[22]

Most critics find Jim to be a sympathetic character, despite the fact that they might see him at least partially as a stereotype. Censors who don't recognize the possibility of Jim's nobleness are not, of course, assessing Twain's attitude towards the Negro in the same way as do most of the critics, and henceforth, arrive at a different conclusion.

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[20] *Ibid.*, pp. 337-338.

[21] James J. Farrell, *The League of Frightened Philistines* (New York: The Vanguard Press, 1945), p. 29.

[22] Hansen, Chadwick, "The Character of Jim and the Ending of Huckleberry Finn," *The Massachusetts Review*, V, (Autumn, 1963), p. 55.

It is because they see only the stereotypical aspects of Jim that they find him "racially offensive" and assume that Twain was taking a negative or pejorative attitude toward the Negro. As we have said, many of them also assume that this attitude they see in Twain might negatively affect the attitudes of Negro students toward themselves and of white students toward Negroes. Censors have demanded and probably will in the future demand the removal of The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn from the schools.

"The Grapes of Wrath":The Problem Novel

As one might expect from the contents of the novel, protestors in both California and Oklahoma have been quite vehement in their condemnation of The Grapes of Wrath. On August 23, 1939, the Kern County Board of Supervisors in California announced that Steinbeck's novel would no longer be allowed in its schools and libraries.[23] At the same time the Associated Farmers were conducting a campaign to keep the novel out of publicly supported institutions because it "distorted the facts," and because it was "obscene sensationalism" and "propaganda in its vilest form."[24]

The Library Board of East St. Louis not only banned the novel but also ordered the librarian to burn the three copies which the library owned. Under pressure, however, the Board rescinded and ordered that the novel be marked "for adults only." The St. Louis Globe-Democrat reported:

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[23] French, Companion, p. 116.

[24] Ibid., p. 117.

> The shift in the Board's position took place after a spirited debate.... John Maher, one of the members favoring the ban, questioned the sociological value of the book and is quoted as saying, "These people cannot be helped and will not be helped, so reading the book won't help any." Mrs. W. H. Matlack, the other opponent of the book, a prominent local clubwoman, said that the book is "vile all the way through." She added, "Its historical value has been disproved. Gone with the Wind had historical value."[25]

Steinbeck is protesting conditions which he saw in American society of the 30's, so the censors say, but there is no need for our children to know of such conditions. Two approaches have been prevalent in reaction to Steinbeck as a social critic. His opponents say that he did not know what he was talking about and that the conditions he described -- such as the inhumanity of the Oklahoma Banks and the California Association of Farmers -- did not really exist. Or, censors say that Steinbeck is anti-American or anti-religious in depicting the abuses he does. One of the most illuminating statements on the novel came from the Honorable Lyle Boren, Congressman from Oklahoma who has been quoted earlier. His speech, reprinted from the Congressional Record, appeared in the Daily Oklahoman on January 24, 1940.

> Mr. Speaker, my colleagues, considerable has been said in the cloakrooms, in the press, and in various reviews about a book entitled The Grapes of Wrath. I cannot find it possible to let this dirty, lying, filthy manuscript go heralded before the public without a word of challenge or protest.

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[25] St. Louis Globe-Democrat, quoted in French, Companion, pp. 130-131.

> I would have my colleagues in Congress, who are concerned themselves with the fundamental economic problems of America know that Oklahoma, like other states in the union, has been portrayed in the low and vulgar lines of this publication. As a citizen of Oklahoma, I would have it known that I resent; for the great state of Oklahoma, the implications in that book. . . .
>
> Today, I stand before this body as a son of a tenant farmer, labeled by John Steinbeck as an "Okie." For myself, for my dad and mother, whose hair is silver in the service of building the state of Oklahoma, I say to you, and to every honest, square-minded reader in America, that the painting Steinbeck made in his book is a lie, a black, infernal creation of a twisted, distorted mind.
>
> Some have blasphemed the name of Charles Dickens by making comparisons between his writing and this. I have no doubt but that Charles Dickens accurately portrayed certain economic conditions in his country in his time but this book portrays only Steinbeck's unfamiliarity with facts and his complete ignorance of his subject.[26]

In viewing the novel as faulty social document, Congressmen Boren assumes that Steinbeck depicted economic conditions in Oklahoma as being worse than they were. While seeing the novel exclusively as social document and ignoring it as a piece of art, Boren wrongly accuses Steinbeck of being unfamiliar with the actual economic conditions in Oklahoma at the time. (See Chapter II.) Presumably, if Steinbeck had "accurately portrayed" economic conditions in Oklahoma, Boren would not have opposed the book.

Protesting against the novel from the pulpit, the Reverend Lee Rector, who was also quoted earlier, called Grapes a

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[26] Congressman Lyle Boren, quoted in Shockley, "Reception," pp. 358-359.

"heaven-shaming and Christ-insulting book," throwing the blame on Steinbeck for the "Communistic base of the story."

> ...We protest with all our hearts against the Communist base of the story ... As does Communism, it shrewdly inveighs against the rich, the preacher, and Christianity. Should any of us Ardmore preachers attend the show which advertises this infamous book, his flock should put him on the spot, give him his walking papers, and ask God to forgive his poor soul.[27]

The censors are not alone in their beliefs that Steinbeck "inveighs against the rich, the preacher, and Christianity." Some critics agree that the novel does condemn certain aspects of American life, but, they also agree, those aspects did and perhaps do exist, and need to be brought to the attention of the American public. Perhaps the most insightful examination of the novel as social criticism is that of Joseph Warren Beach who calls it a "Proletarian novel." In his essay, "John Steinbeck: Art and Propaganda," Beach might, in fact, be answering the censors who link Steinbeck with Communism.

> It is not a communist tract; it was not favorably received by the party, I believe, in spite of the highly sympathetic way in which he treats the party leaders. The ideology is somehow wrong. Too much space is given to the doctor who comes to see the sanitary arrangement of the labor camp... The communist organizers are a little too frank in acknowledging that their object is not so much to win this fight as to develop class consciousness in the workers and make recruits for the revolution. They are men of normal feeling, and they grieve over those who are killed or mutilated. But they eagerly seize on blood and death and use

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[27] The Rev. Lee Rector, quoted in Shockley, "Reception," pp. 358-359.

> them to fan the fires of wrath and violence. Such is the technique of the class struggle; and while the author does not pass judgment on it, he shows it up perhaps too clearly for the purpose of propaganda.[28]

Other critics have found in Steinbeck strains they identify as being particularly American. Frederick I. Carpenter, in one of the most important critiques of The Grapes of Wrath, argues that the novel epitomizes three great aspects of American thought.

> For the first time in history, The Grapes of Wrath brings together and makes real three great skeins of American thought. It begins with the transcendental oversoul, Emerson's faith in the common man, and his Protestant self-reliance. To this it joins Whitman's religion of the life of all men and his mass democracy. And it combines these mystical and poetic ideas with the realistic philosophy of pragmatism and its emphasis on effective action. From this it develops a new kind of Christianity -- not other worldly and passive, but earthly and active. And Oklahoma Casy and the Joads think and do all these philosophical things.[29]

Would the censors react favorably toward these philosophies, however, even if they were able to find them in the book? The critics do not deny that The Grapes of Wrath is social criticism, but time and time again they assert that the book is not a tract promulgating the overthrow of the United States Government by a Communist revolution, but that the book is a novel. As is usually the case, critics do not all agree that the novel is effective social criticism or that it is an admirable piece of art. Most of the critics, however, have recognized that Steinbeck has chosen the art form of the novel to portray and to condemn a problem he sees in our society.[30] The problem need not have been as bad as the artist's view of it. Nevertheless, the artist's view of it need not hide any facts. Even if the critics do not agree that Steinbeck was successful in producing either good social document or art, they seldom fail to praise him for attempting to show as vividly as possible instances of man's inhumanity to man. Beach explains Steinbeck's attitudes with:

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[28] Beach, American Fiction, pp. 328-329.

[29] Frederic I. Carpenter, "The Philosophical Joads," College English, II (January, 1941), pp. 324-325.

> This author is concerned with what has been called the forgotten man; it is clear that he holds the community responsible for the man without work, home, or food. He seems to intimate that what cannot be cured by individual effort must needs be met by collective measures. It is highly important that our people should be made aware of the social problems which remain to be solved within the system which is so good to so many of us. And there is no more effective way of bringing this about than to have actual instances presented vividly to our imaginations by means of fiction. For this reason I regard The Grapes of Wrath as social document of great educational value.[31]

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[30] "...The realistic novel, centered as it is in social setting, has often employed social issues as the cruxes for its plots. It is this matter of illustrating a problem by showing people confronted by it which is at the core of the problem novel." (William Flint Thrall and Addison Hibbard, A Handbook to Literature [Revised by C. Hugh Holman; New York: The Odyssey Press, 1960], p. 380).

[31] Beach, American Fiction, p. 345.

But, we might ask, do we want to consider the novel only as social document? Is there not more that we must ask of a novel to be taught in the secondary school English class? Most of the critics, Beach included, go beyond seeing The Grapes of Wrath as social document and consider it as art, as a novel.

Beach follows up the previously quoted statement by saying,

> Considering it simply as literary art, I would say it gains greatly by dealing with social problems so urgent that they cannot be ignored. It gains thereby in emotional power. But it is a notable work of fiction by virtue of the fact that all social problems are so effectively dramatized in individual situations and characters -- racy, pitiful, farcical, disorderly, well-meaning, shrewd, brave, ignorant, loyal, anxious, obstinate, insuppressible, cockeyed... mortals.... And so the Joads take their place with Don Quixote, with Dr. Faustus, with Galsworthy's Forsyte and Lewis Babbitt in the world's Gallery of symbolic characters, the representative tapestry of the creative imagination.[32]

The critics do not believe that Steinbeck portrays the "Okies" as he does to make fun of them, as some censors have implied, or that he portrays the vigilantes as he does only to depict their evil, but that he does both in order to dramatize social problems. Nor do critics imply, as do censors, that he dramatizes these situations to shock his reader, or to promote rebellion, revolution, or resignation. Most of the critics contend that Steinbeck is portraying the ordeals of all men in the ordeals of the Joads and that the author's vision is one of hope, not despair.

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[32] Ibid., pp. 345-346.

Even if the critics could convince the censors that the novel is not pessimistic, but rather is filled with hope, some censors would still probably insist that the book is too critical of certain aspects of American society. Censors, as we have seen, often assume that Steinbeck's dissatisfaction with the plight of the migratory worker is a derogation of the American way of life. When the censors see Steinbeck's attitude as one of social discontent, they often are afraid that readers will react with similar attitudes after reading the book. Whether what the novelist sees exists or not is at times irrelevant. Many censors still try to protect the youthful reader from coming in contact with sex, violence, deprivation, hunger, and social exploitation, even in their fictional forms.

"1984":Political Attitudes

Censors have called for the removal of George Orwell's 1984 from schools because of disagreeable attitudes they find expressed in the book. As an anti-utopian novel, 1984 is concerned with the nature of politics and government. It questions attitudes and conceptions many feel would best be left alone.[33] This novel differs from The Grapes of Wrath and from The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. Its social criticism does not clearly point to an institution or a segment of society and comment on their faults, either in a realistic or satirical way. The anti-utopian political novel seems to call something less specific into question; it affords the reader more opportunity to dwell on human existence -- what it is and what it could be. 1984 is different from Catcher and Huck Finn because it is more general, open, and forceful in its social criticism.

The censors have made only a few statements pertinent to 1984 as social criticism. Some censors have, however, when commenting on this book and similar books such as Animal Farm, concentrated on the political aspects of them. In the Ahrens study, 1984 was objected to six times, and is the second most objected to novel in the study.[34] In the Burress Wisconsin study 1984 had fifteen objections reported, one of which stated that the book was "depressing," and one of which was by the John Birch Society because they saw the book as a "Study of Communism."[35]

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[33] The term anti-utopian is best defined by Irving Howe, who says,

> The peculiar intensity of such fiction derives not so much from the horror aroused by a possible vision of the future, but from the writer's discovery that in facing the prospect of a future he had been trained to desire, he finds himself struck with horror. The work of these writers is a systematic release of trauma, a painful turning upon their own presuppositions. It is a fiction of urgent yet reluctant testimony, forced by profoundly serious men from their own resistance to fears they cannot evade." (Irving Howe, "The Fiction of Anti-Utopia," New Republic, CXLVI [April 23, 1962], p. 13).

[34] Ahrens, p. 133.

Censors themselves see this book from totally different viewpoints. As cited above, the John Birch Society objected because 1984 is a "Study of Communism." But another writer who is associated with the politically conservative group America's Future objects because the book is not taught enough. E. Merrill Root, in Brainwashing in the High Schools, complains of an imbalance in American textbooks.

> Radical conservatism is not given a chance to speak; it is not even admitted to exist. It is simply ignored: it is not represented at all. It is not a matter of disproportion: it is a matter of no proportion. In not one of these texts are the great literary works of anticommunism, which are an essential part of contemporary history, even mentioned: Animal Farm, Darkness at Noon, 1984, The Road Ahead, or Yvor Thomas's The Tragedy of Socialism.[36]

Apparently the John Birch Society either didn't recognize 1984 as being against Communism or doesn't even want the evils of Communism studied, while Root wants particularly anti-Communistic works studied.

Many of the critics agree with Root that 1984 is anti-communistic. Some critics whose statements we shall examine later, praise Orwell for the book's anti-Communism, but others almost act as censors themselves in condemning Orwell for attitudes which they associate with his anti-Communism. Critic Isaac Deutscher, like the censors and some of the other critics, objects to the book, seeing it as creating "a monster scapegoat."

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[35] Burress, pp. 20, 17.

[36] Root, Brainwashing in the High School (New York: The Devin-Adair Company, 1962), p. 247.

> 1984 is in effect not so much a warning as a piercing shriek announcing the advent of the Black Millennium, the Millennium of damnation.
>
> The shriek, amplified by all the 'mass-media' of our time, has frightened millions of people. But it has not helped them to see more clearly the issues with which the world is grappling; it has not advanced their understanding. It has only increased and intensified the waves of panic and hate that run through the world and obfuscate innocent minds. 1984 has taught millions to look at the conflict between East and West in terms of black and white, and it has shown them a monster bogy and a monster scapegoat for all the ills that plague mankind.[37]

Critics such as Deutscher who are themselves openly and politically partisan in their approach to literature, often agree with many of the attitudes of the censors. Some Marxist critics,[38] like the censors, are against literature which is pessimistic and which offers no solution to the problems it raises. They do not like literature which is cynical and which finds fault with some basic tenet of human nature. Let us consider two other Marxist critics of 1984 who agree with certain attitudes of those censors who object to the book's pessimism. Samuel Sillen says:

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[37] Isaac Deutscher, Russia in Transition and Other Essays (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1957), p. 244.

[38] In Theory of Literature, Rene Wellek and Austin Warren tell us that"Marxist critics not only study these relations between literature and society, but also have their clearly defined conception of what these relations should be, both in our present society and in a future 'classless' society. They practice evaluative, 'judicial' criticism, based on non-literary political, and ethical criteria. They tell us not only what were and are the social relations and implications of an author's work but what they should have been or ought to be... " (Rene Wellek and Austin Warren, Theory of Literature [New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1956], pp. 82-83.) Although some of the Marxist critics may seem dated, it is partially because their popularity has waned with American intellectuals' disillusionment with Communism. They are not, however, extinct; nor are they a relic of the past.

> In short, Orwell's novel coincides perfectly with the propaganda of the National Association of Manufacturers ...
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> The bourgeoisie, in its younger days, could find spokesmen who painted rosy visions of the future. In its decay, surrounded by burgeoning socialism, it is capable only of hate-filled, dehumanized anti-Utopias. Confidence has given way to the nihilistic literature of the graveyard . . . .[39]

Sillen, like the censors, sees the book as pessimistic and "nihilistic" and opposes it on these grounds. Sillen, moreover, reads George Orwell's personal disillusionment with the Soviet Union into the novel.

A second Marxist critic, James Walsh, also feels that 1984 is pessimistic propaganda against the Communist ideology.

> 1984 is merely one weapon in the war of many fronts that has been waged since 1945 and before. Its success, its sales, are a measure of the success of cold war propaganda. It cannot be taken singly, and there is no single answer to it. Books like 1984 thrive on hatred and distrust, and on the disillusion of the working class in Socialism brought about by the policies of the right-wing Labour leaders.
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> ... 1984 thrives on a situation, and that situation will be changed only by the rising movement of the people themselves, against the cold war and

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[39] Samuel Sillen, "Maggot-of-the-Month," Masses and Mainstream, II (August, 1949), p. 81.

> its policies, for peace and Socialism. In this movement the patient and constant work of an ever-increasing body of Communists plays its indispensable part. People will realize, because they know them personally as human beings, that Communists are not gangsters and hypocritical intellectuals, activated only by a lust for power, but are normal people, working in a sane way for a better life. 1984 is already on the way out. We need the extra push now to get rid of it altogether.[40]

Here Walsh demonstrates most vividly the criteria of Marxist critics' for evaluating a novel on the basis of what they see as the social attitudes of its author.

Most of the non-Marxist critics, however, do not feel that the book's possible pessimism is necessarily reason to oppose the reading of it. Nor do they see its pessimism only as the product of an anti-Communist attitude. Both censors and critics agree that 1984 hit hard at the heart of our times, but what the effect of the wound might be, is not so easily agreed upon. Irving Howe comes closest to recognizing the difficulty posed by the novel.

> .... And because it derives from a perception of how our time may end, the book trembles with an eschatological fury that is certain to create among its readers, even those who sincerely believe they admire it, the most powerful kinds of resistance. It already has. Openly, in England, more cautiously in America, there has arisen a desire among intellectuals to belittle Orwell's achievement, often in the guise of celebrating his humanity and his "goodness." They feel embarrassed before the apocalyptic desperation of the book, they begin to wonder whether it may not be just a little overdrawn and humorless, they even suspect it is tinged with the hysteria of the

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[40] James Walsh, "George Orwell," The Marxist Quarterly, III (January, 1956), pp. 429-430.

> death-bed. Nor can it be denied that all of us would feel more comfortable if the book could be cast out. It is a remarkable book.[41]

Howe, unlike the censors, does not want the book cast out, but he does recognize that it might be upsetting to its readers. Yet the reader need not react with disillusionment, depression, or resistance. Instead, the reader can react as some critics believe Orwell wished. The reader might ,in fact, gain courage and perception from Orwell's attitudes. Erich Fromm suggests:

> Certainly Orwell's picture is exceedingly depressing, especially if one recognizes that as Orwell himself points out, it is not only a picture of an enemy but of the whole human race at the end of the twentieth century. One can react to this picture in two ways: either by becoming more hopeless and resigned, or by feeling there is still time, and responding with greater clarity and greater courage.[42]

Fromm is not alone in his implications that the novel need not breed pessimism as most of the censors and some critics imply, but that it can be seen, in fact, as doing just the opposite. John Atkins says that Orwell

> ... wished to rouse people to the dangers inherent in existing political tendencies. He did not believe that the individual was altogether powerless, although this is probably the majority feeling in the Western world today. He knew that many of his readers would still be living in 1984 and he hoped that this book would act as a stimulus, cause them to take warning and then action to avert it . . . .[43]

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[41] Irving Howe, Politics and the Novel (New York: Horizon Press, 1957), p. 236.

[42] Erich Fromm, "Afterward" on 1984 (New York: New American Library, 1961), p. 266.

[43] John Atkins, George Orwell (London: John Calder, 1954), pp. 252-253.

In the eyes of most of the critics, *1984* points out incipient evils which exist in Western society and warns the reader to beware of the growing strength of these evils. The book need not, however, be seen as a prediction. Orwell, most of the critics say, warns that the world of *1984* *could* come to be, but that it is not inevitable, as most of the censors would seem to imply.

Whether or not the censors and critics see Orwell as being partisan, both agree that questions of politics infuse the novel *1984*. As we have seen, at least one individual who is usually on the side of the censors has advocated that the book be taught because he sees it as being anti-Communistic. We have also seen that at least some of the critics, on the other hand, have suggested that the book be banned for precisely the same reasons. But neither of these viewpoints represent the majority opinions. Most of the comments on Orwell's political attitudes have been aimed at his literary involvement in politics. Some critics have felt that because the novel concerns itself so much with ideology, it suffers as a piece of art. Critic Laurence Brander, for instance, says that Orwell wanted to say three things:

> that English Socialism is an incipient totalitarianism; that the worse aspects of totalitarianism is that it does not hesitate to enter the innermost recesses of the human spirit and destroy it; that the way of thinking adopted and enforced by totalitarianism threatens their people with total spiritual corruption. He said all these things well, but they are subjects for pamphlets rather than fiction.[44]

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[44] Laurence Brander, *George Orwell* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1954), p. 184.

But Irving Howe praises 1984 as a political novel. He does not see the subject matter as more suitable for a pamphlet than for a novel.

> The style of 1984 is the style of a man whose commitment to a dreadful vision is at war with the nausea to which that vision reduces him. So acute is this conflict that delicacies of phrasing or displays of rhetoric come to seem frivolous--he has no time, he must get it all down. Those who fail to see this, I am convinced, have succumbed to the pleasant tyrannies of estheticism; they have allowed their fondness for a cultivated style to blind them to the urgencies of prophetic expression. The last thing Orwell cared about when he wrote 1984, the last thing he should have cared about, was literature.[45]

Howe's vision of literature is in some ways closer to that of the Marxist critics than it is to the vision of most of the other critics. The difference between Howe and the Marxists is that since Howe hasn't the commitment to one ideology, he does not find Orwell's disillusionment with Communism a reason for dismissing the novel. Howe is at the extreme opposite end of the spectrum from the censors. His belief that the truth of politics, the "terror" of it, is a fit subject for the novel is, indeed, some distance from the views of most other critics.

1984 is concerned with questions of freedom, of power, and of struggles associated with political ideologies. Many censors have felt that politics like religion, sex and questions of race, should have no place in the English classroom. Hence, censors have and will probably continue to object to 1984.

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[45] Howe, Politics and the Novel, p. 237.

Summary

As we have observed, censors often attack what they see as the social, political, or racial views of an author. Many censors seem to assess authors in terms of their own attitudes and because of partisan and literal readings of the novel, object to references they interpret as "derogatory." This has been true, for example, of Negro responses to Huck Finn. The same phenomenon occurs, however, among critics, as evidenced in the Marxist objections to 1984.

The censors themselves may recognize contradictions within American institutions; indeed, they may even recognize that some sordidness exists within our society. Nevertheless, they do not want books taught in the schools to deal with such things. This at least partially because many censors see adolescents as naifs, as innocents, and they do not want to have books corrupt them.

Even though some critics react to the attitudes of authors in ways similar to censors, many of them feel that the aspects of society portrayed by the novelist exist and that the novelist is justified in criticizing or at least commenting upon them. Many critics favor an author's presenting reality, even if that reality is unpleasant. Many even imply that the reader should be made aware of "objectionable" aspects of life so that he can resist them rather than succumb to them in ignorance or innocence.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS:

THE FUNCTION OF LITERATURE AS VIEWED BY CRITICS AND CENSORS AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SCHOOLS

We have seen how censors and critics look at four novels. We have seen that the censors adopt certain attitudes toward these novels and that the critics' attitudes toward the books (although they differ among themselves) sometimes agree with the censors and sometimes do not. In this last chapter we will summarize previous observations of the censorship of controversial novels in the secondary schools by examining more closely some views of critics and censors for their implications concerning the function of the novel in the schools. Although much of this discussion might seem to over-simplify by generalizing, it will help to clarify the attitudes of both literary critics and of censors.

Critics see novels in a particular way; they usually speak of the novel's readers in general terms and for the most part, do not concern themselves with whether or not the novel is or should be used in the schools. Censors also see novels in a particular way, but they frequently do address themselves to the school situation. Despite this difficulty, both viewpoints can be examined in terms of assumptions about the effect of the novel on the adolescent reader. Even though they do not usually differentiate the adolescent audience from any other, critics do consider it within the framework of their views.

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As we have seen and as we shall continue to see, censors and critics agree and disagree both among themselves and with members of the other group. Indeed, neither group is mutually exclusive. In order to discuss certain intellectual arguments concerning the function of the novel, we will examine positions taken by censors and critics in the light of two aspects commonly associated with the novel in literary criticism. These two aspects could be polar ends or they could be intertwined, but for the moment let us think of them as free translations of Horace's description of the function of poetry as dulce and utile.[1] Although these two aspects are not necessarily always separate and equal, and literary criticism is not unanimous on the usage of the terminology, many would agree that the function of the novel can be seen in various ways through the novel's role as a means of entertainment and as a means of edification. The novel may be considered "sweet" in that it is not work and is perhaps, pleasurable, and it is "useful" in that it instructs in some way or another.

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[1] Horace, Ars Poetica, ll. 333-344.

The Critics and the Function of the Novel

One group of critics has been most explicit in evaluating literature purely from the standpoint of its "sweetness." The epitome of this concept of entertainment in literature is often called "art for art's sake." Under this rubric the critic insists only that the work of art be a work of art and that it be seen as existing in and for itself. The relationship between reality and the novel is of no importance here; all that matters is that the novel be aesthetically pleasing to the reader. This school of criticism was most active during the late nineteenth century, centering around critics and poets such as Baudelaire, Oscar Wilde, and Walter Pater. While "l'art pour l'art" type of criticism has little relationship with the novels we have been studying, it does exemplify an attitude worth noting. The attitude is similar to the one Mark Twain facetiously recommended his readers take in regard to *Huck Finn*.

> Notice
> Persons attempting to find a motive in this narrative will be prosecuted; persons attempting to find a moral in it will be banished; persons attempting to find a plot in it will be shot.
> By Order of the Author
> Per G. G. , Chief of Ordinance.[2]

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[2] Twain, *Huck Finn*, "Notice."

Readers of Huck Finn should read and enjoy the novel. They should not look for morals or meanings. Twain knew that his readers would not take him seriously; one cannot possibly read The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn in the same way as he reads Tom Sawyer. Few contemporary critics, however, would have novels read only for the sake of their artistry. Critics can say, as does Archibald McLeish, that a "poem should not mean, but be, " but they seldom say the same for the novel. Some critics do argue that the form, the structure of the novel is most important and that the ideas in it are secondary, (if they can be separated at all). Few, however, see the novel only as an enjoyable object, completely divorced from the realities of society. Because of the length of most novels and because novels do, by necessity, rely on such contextual-binding elements as character, plot, and narration, critics are not inclined to read them purely as beautiful works of art. Most critics are men of their times and do not find it possible to live the life of the aesthete, unconcerned with social and political realities.

Critics do insist that the novel be enjoyable, but they qualify the type of enjoyment they ask from the novel. To most critics a novel should mean as well as be. Henry James, novelist and critic both, insists that

> The only obligation to which in advance we may hold a novel, without incurring the accusation of being arbitrary, is that it be interesting. That general responsibility rests upon it, but it is the only one I can think of. The ways in which it is at liberty to accomplish this result

> (of interesting us) strikes me as innumerable, and such as can only suffer from being marked out or fenced in by prescription. They are as various as the temperament of man, and they are successful in proportion as they reveal a particular mind, different from others. A novel is in its broadest definition a personal, a direct impression of life: that, to begin with, constitutes its value, which is greater or less according to the intensity of the impression. But there will be no intensity at all, and therefore no value, unless there is freedom to feel and say. The tracing of a line to be followed, of a tone to be taken, of a form to be filled out, is a limitation of that freedom and a suppression of the very thing we are most curious about.[3]

This statement by James combined the idea of entertainment or interest, as he calls it, with the second function of the novel. For the novel to be interesting, he tells us, it must have the freedom to deal with any part of human nature. James implies that the novelist cannot help but express an attitude towards mankind: the novelist cannot help but provide some sort of edification for his reader. For James and for many critics, the edifying role of a novel is intrinsically bound up with its art; one does not exist for the sake of the other. The novel, then, need not teach any factual or statistical truths, but through its art comments on human nature, perhaps even on controversial aspects of human nature.

Some critics conceive the function of the novel less broadly. It is not to please, to entertain, or to interest;

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[3] Henry James, "The Art of Fiction," Henry James: The Future of the Novel, ed. Leon Edel (New York: Vintage Books, 1956), pp. 9-10. First appeared in Longman's Magazine (London), September, 1884.

these are merely sugar coatings. The function rather, is to inculcate, to teach, and even to preach. The novel may entertain, but it does so only in order to teach better.

Critics approach the novel from different backgrounds, and, consequently, often seek different things from it. As we have seen in Chapter IV and elsewhere, the Marxists look for their view of reality, the Negroes for theirs. Of course there is great latitude of belief within these categories and a great deal of arbitrariness about them. Many critics believe literature should teach, but what it should teach depends upon what critic is discussing the work. For an example, we shall briefly discuss one Catholic critic's viewpoint towards literature.

One eminent Catholic, Harold C. Gardiner, has stated his particular attitude well. Literature should widen the world of understanding and love, Gardiner says

> Literature can do this precise thing because, to conclude, it has of its nature a moral and religious bent which manifests itself in that particular inspiration that is the hallmark of all great books. If this inspiration consists in stirring the reader's emotions and imagination to a realization that there is some heroism in the weakest of men as well as some weakness in the most heroic of men, then the reader is playing the role of God's spy. God sees men to love them--not groundlessly, nor irrationally, or sentimentally--but because He sees His own infinite perfections mirrored in every one of them. If literature be simply true to itself, it can help bring those who approach it as it should be approached to see men in the same way. And this way is based on charity and can and ought to result in a deepening of charity.[4]

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[4] Harold C. Gardiner, Norms for the Novel (Garden City; New York: Hanover House, 1960), pp. 148-149.

Gardiner is quite liberal in many of his attitudes toward literature and there need not be anything particularly Catholic in this statement. Catholic-oriented critics comprise one group, however, who view literature primarily in terms of the moral quality and effect it has. But Gardiner is willing to view morality broadly. He says that "even Huckleberry Finn is a religious work."

> It is a boy's search in a boy's terms, and in an American boy's terms, for what he conceives to be happiness. That his conceptions of it are hazy and funny and sometimes adolescently foolish only adds to the poignancy of our realization that just as Huck in real life would doubtless have outgrown his adolescent dreams of happiness, so we also have almost daily to grow out of incomplete conceptions of it into an ever more mature realization of what that happiness really is.[5]

Gardiner praises literature which engenders hope and recommends literature which will inspire the reader.

> If I have seen in my reading that hope is one of the mainsprings of human action, then I can look with a hopeful eye on human beings with whom I come in contact. It will not be any subjective sentimentality or emotionalism, but a characteristic objectively present in human beings and brought into focus in literature that will enable me to maintain that I have a rational ground for being hopeful about people -- about their success in overcoming this or that particular trouble or temptation and indeed, ultimately, about their eternal destiny.
>
> This is not, I believe, to read too much into the purpose or function of a good book, because any good book will portray human nature as it actually or really (realistically) is. And human nature as it is is frail, but at the same time

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[5] Ibid., p. 125.

> majestic with the majesty that comes to it from its power to aspire, from its power to seek, across and through all time into eternity, the "beauty that is ever ancient and ever new." There is an even deeper majesty, of course. It is the majesty that is human nature's because it can not only seek but actually find. The aspiration can fructify to its destined term -- it can reach the goal.[6]

Part of the truth that Gardiner sees in his conception of reality is an eternal justice and inspiration. Gardiner equates religion with morality and moral literature with "oughtness." He is against naturalism in the novel, saying that naturalism is more like a photograph than a piece of art. Things should not be shown only as they are, but as they "ought" to be.

> This moral approach to the function of art is admittedly a narrow gate and a strait path. If interpreted in a doctrinaire and apologetic way it leads directly into preachment through art. This was all too evident some two decades ago in the Marxist line that was to be clearly traced in some fairly mature fiction. Such an approach may lead to Catholic preachment as well, if one forgets that the morality--the "oughtness"-- of the Aristotelian concept is an inherent relationship of the reality with the ideal and not an overt elaboration of the ideal superimposed upon the reality.[7]

He recognizes the difficulties of such a position and is aware of the confinements. If one looks for a certain morality in art, however broadly conceived that morality is, one approaches the novel with preconceived ideas which other readers and other critics might not have.[8]

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[6] *Ibid.*, p. 99.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 118.

Critics might have preconceived ideas of their own, or they might attempt to approach the novel with no preconceptions concerning the morality it depicts or the lessons it might teach. With what can one replace a specific religious or political ideology as an approach to assessing the edification values of a piece of literature? Critic F. R. Leavis demonstrates a position which seems to be less partisan than Gardiner's. Leavis' position is still Christian morality based upon optimism and affirmation which leads to a definite reproach for alienation and naturalism in art. He observes the "great tradition" in the English novel.

> ... It is in the same way true of the other great English novelists that their interest in their art gives them the opposite of an affinity with Pater and George Moore; it is, brought to an intense focus, an unusually developed interest in life. For, far from having anything of Flaubert's disgust or disdain or boredom, they are all distinguished by a vital capacity for experience, a kind of reverent openness before life, and a marked moral intensity.[9]

The "marked moral intensity" Leavis sees in the contrast between D. H. Lawrence and Henry Miller and Lawrence Durrell. Leavis approves of Lawrence because amidst destruction and disintegration Lawrence speaks for life and growth. On the other hand, Leavis condemns Miller and Durrell for "doing dirt" on life. As Lionel Trilling so aptly says of Dr. Leavis:

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[8] What is "an inherent relationship" in Gardiner's ethos need not, of course, be inherent in the ethos of others. Consider, for example, the Marxist critics discussed in Chapter IV.

[9] F. R. Leavis, The Great Tradition (London: Chatto & Windus, 1948), pp. 8-9.

> Dr. Leavis's own critical sensibility is characteristically a moral one, not only in the sense that he happily affirms the value of common morality, but also in the sense that, having perceived life to be of a certain weight and pressure, he requires of art that it react to experience with a proportionate counterthrust of commitment, endurance, and intelligence.[10]

Leavis does not have the theological undertones of Gardiner, but his insistence on morality seeks the same kind of affirmation from literature as Gardiner. Leavis' attitude is not criticized because of his view of morality. His view is, however, indicative of an approach to the function of literature which, upon close examination, has many implications not totally different from those of many censors.

Many critics and censors argue that the novel is becoming more and more realistic, frank, and immoral. All of the books with which we have dealt can be considered within the framework of the modern novel, especially if we take seriously Ernest Hemingway's comment that the modern novel begins with The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. Over fifty years ago Henry James foresaw that the novel would change, that it would have to redefine itself and be redefined by those who read it.

> As for our novel, I may say lastly on this score that as we find it in England today it strikes me as addressed in a large degree to "young people," and that this in itself constitutes a presumption that it will be rather shy. There are certain things

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[10] Lionel Trilling, "Dr. Leavis and the Moral Tradition (1949)," in A Gathering of Fugitives (Boston: Beacon Press, 1956), p. 102.

> which it is generally agreed not to discuss, not even to mention, before young people. That is very well, but the absence of discussion is not a symptom of the moral passion.[11]

James felt that as a freer society developed, a freer literature would also develop. To be interesting, as James insisted the novel must be, it has to be able to deal with all of life. James recognized that novelists, like many other members of society, often tried to protect the young and the innocent. But he realized that the young change from generation to generation, and that what the law calls community standards differ and change. James was interested in the future development of the novel and not in the reading habits of adolescents, but his statements recognize insight and rationality in the young reader which many censors and critics seem to deny.

> The novel is older, and so are the young. It would seem that everything the young can possibly do for us in the matter has been successfully done. They have kept out one thing after the other, yet there is a certain completeness we lack, and the curious thing is that it appears to be they themselves who are making the great discovery.... There are too many sources of interest neglected--whole categories of manners, whole corpuscular classes and provinces, museums of character and condition, unvisited; while it is on the other hand mistakenly taken for granted that safety lies in all the loose and thin material that keeps reappearing in forms at once ready-made and sadly the worse for wear. The simple themselves may finally turn against our simplifications; so that we need not, after all, be more royalist than the king or more childish than the children. It is certain that there is no real health for any art--I am not speaking, of course, of any mere industry--

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[11] Henry James, "The Art of Fiction," pp. 25-26.

> that does not move a step in advance of its farthest follower. It would be curious--really a great comedy--if the renewal were to spring just from the satiety of the very readers for whom the sacrifices have hitherto been supposed to be made.[12]

James states that literature should not be limited to, nor written for, those who would presumably have the lowest threshold of tolerance for resisting any evil temptations, unwanted attitudes, or anti-social behavior. He seems to go past the early legal concept of "l'homme moyen sensuel" to the libertarian belief that the limits of society can and should be stretched (see Chapter I). James' moral passion is for "truth" in the novel, but it is a truth which takes into account all of human nature, not just that "truth" which might agree with the beliefs of one particular group or segment of society. The truth which the modern novel might depict then, is not depicted in the same way as the classics might depict truth. If the novel has changed along with the change in society, as James predicted, has society's acceptance of the novel grown also?

Controversial novels exist now, as ever before. The modern novel has many critics who support it, but others condemn certain aspects of modern fiction. Critic Edmund Fuller has launched a particularly vigorous attack on some modern fiction.

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[12] Henry James, "The Future of the Novel," Henry James: The Future of the Novel, ed. Leon Edel (New York: Vintage Books, 1956), p. 40. First appeared in Vol. 28 of The Universal Anthology, 1899.

> That aspect of modern writing that concerns me most deeply is the vision or image of man, the conception of the nature of man, found in it. I could not have this concern had I not some perspective on man as my frame of reference; for me it is that image of man that is found in the Judeo-Christian tradition, which still primarily influences our moral and ethical thought, and has not become in any way obsolete, though we might be led to think so by dwelling long in the inner worlds of certain of our writers.
>
> I feel that a corrupted and debased image of man has become current and become influential through the persuasiveness and literary skills of some of its projectors. A work of art is always taken to be representative, and unless clear limits are set for the scope of the representation within any work, it is assumed to be more or less universal. There are corrupted and debased men; there have always been and will always be such. It is possible, and now fashionable, in some sets, to portray such men with a tacit assumption or bold implication not that they are particular but that the essential nature of man is revealed in them. It is the often unrecognized, sweeping assumptions of this kind that I challenge.[13]

Fuller, unlike Gardiner, is concerned only with the modern novel. Like Gardiner, though, Fuller approaches literature with preconceived partisan standards eminating from an extra-literary source. Fuller brings to his interpretation of man in modern fiction what he calls the "Judeo-Christian tradition." Fuller's interpretation of the tradition,however, seems somewhat narrow. Irving Howe in the New Republic has severely criticized Fuller's notions.

> Ever since Daniel Defoe started writing, narratives about loose women, hordes of moralists have buzzed around the novel, denouncing its low and vicious tone. Such critics refuse--they do not care enough about literature--to see that the

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[13] Edmund Fuller, Man in Modern Fiction (New York: Vintage Books, 1949), p. xv.

> novelist who struggles with unsavory material and sometimes even succumbs to it, may yet be engaged in a moral quest of his own, perhaps more serious, because more problematical than that of the writer who knows in advance both his road and destination.
>
> Not only do these critics have a cramped and frightened view--they usually claim to fear it will corrupt someone--but, more important, they have a view of morality that is also cramped and frightened. They think of morality as a given, a yardstick for ready-made judgment and a stick for liberal chastisement. They can be amusing when malicious, but are boring when merely sincere.[14]

Critic Wayne Booth accuses Howe in this case of suggesting that "...the moral question is ... irrelevant to the critical enterprise,"[15] but, in this writer's opinion, that does not really seem to be true. Howe seems to be suggesting that partisan or narrow moral outlooks such as Fuller's can be inappropriate on the part of the critics.

> Nor does Mr. Fuller display enough intellectual curiosity or Christian charity, to consider at length: why this moral uncertainty and disorder? why have his victims fallen? Is it merely due to the poison of secularism? is there something in our experience that might make us more sympathetic to the unfocused revolt, the rebellion of desperate incomprehension, which characterizes some of the writers he discusses?[16]

Howe is not really suggesting that morality is out of place in the novel or in criticism of it. He is merely defining morality in different terms than has Fuller. Howe is willing to allow the novelist to look at all aspects of life, to question and allow readers to question, the whole concept of "common morality." He refutes what he sees as Fuller's assumption that seeing corruption will cause corruption.

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[14] Irving Howe, "Sermons on Depravity," New Republic CXXXVIII (June 23, 1958), p. 25.

[15] Wayne C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961), footnote 2, p. 379.

[16] Howe, "Sermons on Depravity," p. 25.

It has been observed by others that if the literature deals with all aspects of life, then the reader who is exposed to "vice" may, in fact, become more *moral* through his exposure. The concept that by knowing evil one is better able to resist it has perhaps been best stated by John Milton.

> He that can apprehend and consider vice with all her baits and seeming pleasures, and yet abstain, and yet distinguish, and yet prefer that which is truly better, he is the true wayfaring Christian. I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without the dust and heat. Assuredly we bring not innocence into the world, we bring impurity much rather: that which purifies us is trial, and trial is by what is contrary. That virtue therefore which is but a youngling in the contemplation of evil, and knows not the utmost that vice promises to her followers, and rejects it, is but a blank virtue, not a pure; her whiteness is but an excremental whiteness....[17]

If the critic is completely nonpartisan and accepting about the morality of the modern novel and the edifying value it might have, he must be willing to question his own beliefs. The critic must also deal with the problem of whether or not immorality in a novel will cause immorality in the reader. The critic must be willing to approach the novel, as many are not, as a fictional representation of all aspects of life, not as only a guidebook for moral living. When defining the function of literature, some critics we have seen are able to integrate and consider the two aspects of entertainment and edification. Some are able to accept the aesthetic as an integral part of the novel and to conceive of edification in general, humanistic, non-partisan terms. But still, the implications of other critics, although they do take into account the form, artistry, and intentions of the novelist, oftentimes bear a marked resemblance to the implications of some censors.

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[17] John Milton, *Areopagitica*, *John Milton Prose Selections*, ed. Merritt Y. Hughes (New York: Odyssey Press, 1947), pp. 223 -224. First published November 24, 1644.

The Censors and the Function of the Novel

Censors, as we have seen, often view literature in terms of its effect upon a particular audience. The censors with whom we are dealing are those who by definition are concerned with the function of literature taught to adolescents in the schools. Since censors usually react emotionally to certain aspects of the novel, their statements are often terse and negative. Even though most of these statements censors make about books concern single works or parts of works and are often reactions against them, positive attributes the censors expect from novels to be taught in the schools lie behind these statements.[18]

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[18] Many of the statements made by censors, as mentioned earlier, come from reports in newspapers, journals, and magazines. The periodicals of censorship groups, with few exceptions, seldom comment in any great detail on particular books, and even less so on literature in general. Controversies, as we have seen, have been numerous, but written

Many censors think that the primary function of the novel in the schools is to teach something useful, to be a model of one kind or another. They perceive novels, quite often, in a most utilitarian way. They see the novel as a thing, as a tool, which is to be used by the teacher of English and the student. They see the novel as a means to an instructional end,e.g.,correct language usage. Seldom is the novel viewed as a pleasurable object, as a movie, TV, or a recording might be. The novel should be something which is practicably useful. Censors stress the *utile* of a novel much more than they do the *dulce*.

Censors are only part of a large group of the reading audience who might find novels "frivolous" and a "waste of time." To many the novel is a second-class literary citizen, not of the same category as essays, biography, and history. The novel does not contribute directly to one's fund of knowledge, facts, and skills as quickly and as practicably as do other written materials or as do actions.

Fiction is by definition, a lie; and many would not want to indulge themselves or have others indulged upon such falsities, especially at the public's expense and responsibility.

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material on them is sparse. Not many of the school literature controversies, with the exception of *Rosenberg v. New York Board of Education* (Chapter I) have reached the courts, so legal records give little documentation of censors' views. As we have seen and shall see again, those censors who have been most vocal, often also happen to be critics, as in the cases of Robert Bowen and E. Merrill Root.

Fiction leads to daydreaming, to fantasizing, to leading the life of Walter Mitty. To many, reading novels is a waste of time. Many have felt that novels appeal to the reader only sensually and that that in itself is a bad thing. This puritan ethic is not held by all censors, of course, nor are the censors the only ones to hold it, by any means.

In his book Are American Teachers Free?, Howard K. Beale relates that in the mid-nineteenth century Quakers in America specifically objected to the teaching of any fiction in the schools.[19] Such classics of school fiction as Ivanhoe and Silas Marner are accepted now, but few would argue that one of the reasons they are taught is that the students enjoy them. Censors seldom accept a novel as a work of art, to be appreciated in and for itself, regardless of its relationship to the realities of life. Even Horace Mann on one occasion demonstrated one attitude of censors when he asked Richard H. Dana to rewrite Two Years Before the Mast so that it could be used in the schools. Dana says that Mann

> ...finally gave me to understand that the interest and value of a book consisted in its moral teachings and the information it conveyed as to matters of fact. A narrative, a description, had no value except as it conveyed some moral lesson or some useful fact. The narrative was a mere vehicle for conveying knowledge. He thought my narrative interested persons, and therefore should be made use of for valuable purposes, as a gilding to a pill, as a mode of getting the attention of readers,

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[19] Howard K. Beale, Are American Teachers Free? (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), p. 269.

> especially the young, to various information, statistical, etc., which I might interweave with it.[20]

"Facts, hard facts" is what concerns Charles Dickens' schoolmaster Gradgrind. But is this what the novelist, the critic, or what the teacher or student of literature is concerned with in the novel? Fiction does not relate facts as does history nor does it (in the most strict sense) teach as can a mathematics textbook. By reading the novels studied in this thesis, the adolescent reader doesn't really learn very much even about how to spend three days alone in New York, how to float down the Mississippi River, or how to drive from Oklahoma to California by truck.

That the novel might exist only for the amusement of its readers would not be acceptable to most censors, past or present; that the information it conveys might be different from hard facts probably would not be acceptable either. If students are to waste time on fiction, many censors feel, it should teach them something useful or should at least affirm values held in the community.

For example, many censors assume that the language of a novel should be that language which the adolescent reader would use at home, or in the classroom. Many almost go as far as to imply that novels should serve some of the same purposes as grammar books. That is, novels should present language which the student should be taught to use. (See Chapter II.) If the student will, as many believe, use the language he sees in print, then the language he does see in print should be grammatically and socially acceptable. Colloquial speech, as well as profanity and obscenities in novels, would therefore not be acceptable to censors.

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[20] Charles F. Adams, *Richard Henry Dana: A Biography*, I (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1840), 118-119.

Secondly, many censors,like many critics want the novel to teach positive morality as they themselves see it. Usually censors have objected to anything which is highly critical of their status quo. The novels they would want the school to teach are novels that affirm those things in which they themselves believe. Many censors, as we have seen, represent partisan interests, as do many critics. Most censors take the attitudes they find in the novels literally, just as they take the language and actions of the characters. Many are then led to believe that the novel should not criticize, but should present positive affirmation.

As a further example of what censors see as the function of literature, we shall briefly examine statements made by E. Merrill Root. Root, as we know, is a literary critic and has more sophistication in his attitudes toward literature than do most censors. But Root also represents the censors. He does evaluate textbooks for America's Future and exemplifies many of the assumptions of those censors who say only, "Aren't there enough works of beautiful literature to be taught?" In a special report for America's Future entitled Great Literature Suitable for Use in Schools and Colleges Root recommends and discusses certain books he would have taught in the schools. As we saw in Chapter IV, Root likes 1984 because it is "anti-collectivist."[21] On the other hand, Root, like the censors, (and certain other critics) worries about disillusioning youth and having them come in contact with questionable or sordid aspects of our society.

> Schools and colleges should be islands of light, preserving and presenting the classical, the real, the books that combine wisdom and beauty. The books chosen should not be flotsam and jetsam tossed to and fro on shifting contemporary tides; they should be stars that stand shining and unshaken above the tides--the stars by which men steer
> ... Education should never conform to the fashions of the hour; it should discover, cherish, and uphold the rare works that express quality, value, and meaning--works that are not fireflies and meteors, but fixed and abiding stars. Education should not intensify the aberrations of any time, but should conserve the qualities and values that are eternal.[22]

It seems to this writer that Root might approve of some novels which are against those things he is against and very much for those novels which positively portray the things he is for. He never explicitly states what qualities and values he considers eternal, but his further statements lead one to believe that they would be very much like the values of critics such as Gardiner and Leavis, as well as most of the censors we have cited.

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[21] E. Merrill Root, Great Literature Suitable for Use in Schools and Colleges, p. 3.

[22] Ibid., p. 1.

> ... A little closer to us there are such rare and great classics as W. H. Hudson's Green Mansions, or A Crystal Age, or The Purple Land--books full of wisdom and beauty, of reverence for life, of the heroic and joyous (even while tragic) in life. No school worthy of the name can present literature truly if it omits Green Mansions.... Another must is William Saroyan's one masterpiece, The Human Comedy--that sane and joyous book, the work of a slighter (yet splendid) Dickens, a book to restore our lost sense of life. All of these classics bring us quality, value, and meaning; they establish again the noble and the heroic; they enhance our faith, our hope, and our love.[23]

Root's belief that books should "restore our lost sense of life" is somewhat analogous to Robert Bowen's belief that writers such as Salinger deprave and corrupt. Apparently Root and others would have the schools teach literature in order to counteract those books they feel tend to depress and deprave by stressing the negative and problematical sides of life.

> ... There are doubtless other fine affirmative life-enhancing books. I do not exhaust the list. But I do know that from my own experience as a teacher of contemporary literature that these are great books, and that students respond to them with a happy acceptance--delighted at the novelty of discovering books that have beauty, that have wisdom, that say yes to life.[24]

Like the censors and like some of the critics cited earlier, Root wants books taught which "say yes to life," not those which might point out its problems and leave them unresolved.

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[23] Ibid., p. 2.

[24] Ibid., p. 4.

Summary and Conclusions

We have seen that censors and critics do not always represent polarities, but range along a continuum in their views of the function of literature. In the middle are those censors and those critics who agree on the edifying and entertaining role of the novel. At one end of the continuum there are certain censors who read the novel purely as a social document. In brief, they see the novel as non-fiction, a critical social essay or commentary. Many of these read the material so literally that they believe the novel might have a definite detrimental effect on the reader. At the other end of the continuum are certain critics who read the novel as a work of art which mirrors human nature and is free to deal with any aspect of life. They see the possibility that the novel might offer the reader an aesthetic catharsis so that he will not act in anti-social ways.

Despite the common ground shared by some critics and some censors, very few censors incorporate artistic or sophisticated ways of perceiving the novels. For example, censors seldom consider carefully the reasons that an author might have for using certain language, characters, and actions within the scheme of the total novel. Because they read the work so literally, censors do not recognize satire or irony. Many assume not only that Huck believes what he says, but that Twain believes it also. Censors seldom will accept social criticism or the portrayal of a morality different from their own in a novel taught in the schools since they so often believe that the main purpose of the author in such cases is to subvert the morals or the optimism of the young.

The teacher who attempts to use a controversial book in his classroom and is confronted by a censor must not only understand the book he is using, but must also understand why the censor opposes the book. One strategy, either consciously or unconsciously, is to avoid using materials which could arouse the ire of anyone, hence for many teachers the problem will never arise. Other teachers of English, however, might at some time in their careers be confronted by opposition to what they are teaching. In cases which are not handled by the administration in the manner seeming most expedient (which often is having the book removed), the teacher might have to defend the controversial book.

As we have seen, the attitudes of censors are not those kinds of attitudes which the arguments of literary authorities are likely to change. Censors will probably not be converted by telling them that many people, judges and critics included, do not consider Catcher a dirty book, 1984 Communistic, or Huck Finn anti-Negro. Teachers of the novels can at least find out if the censor has read the complete novel and to what specifically the censor is objecting.

For example, the National Council of Teachers of English has recommended that persons objecting to the use of a book in school be required by the school to file a written request which asks for the censor's name, if he is representing any organization or group, to what in the book he specifically objects (asking for specifics, including the citation of pages), what he feels might be the result of reading the book, if he sees anything good in the book, if he read the entire book, if he is aware of the judgment of critics on the book, what he believes to be the theme of the book, and if he would recommend the book for any age group. Finally, the censor is asked what he would like done about the book. He is given three choices: 1) "Do not assign it to my child," 2) "Withdraw it from all students as well as from my child," and 3) "Send it back to the English department office for re-evaluation."[25]

Legally, as we have seen in the discussion of Rosenberg v. Board of Education in Chapter I, the courts probably would recognize some professional autonomy for the teacher and for those concerned with the curriculum in literature. Moreover, the courts would probably consider the works in question more as critics do than as censors. Teachers of controversial novels should, in this writer's opinion, look at the books and try to have censors look at the books as might the courts. The book must be considered as a whole, and the intentions of the author, as seen by experts, must be taken into consideration. The audience to whom the book is taught must also be considered.[26] This is said recognizing that most censorship controversies and the censors who precipitate them are as little subject to legal authority as they are to literary authority. Most such controversies remain extra-legal and non-literary.

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[25] See National Council of Teachers of English, The Students' Right to Read (Champaign, Ill.: NCTE, 1962).

There is little reason to believe that there will be any amelioration of censorship and attempted censorship of controversial novels taught in the schools. Rather, because novels are now so readily available in inexpensive paperback editions and because secondary school teachers seem to be increasingly dissatisfied with anthologies and with the classroom classics such as Green Mansions and The Scarlet Letter, more and more teachers will probably use additional new materials in the classroom. Also, in this writer's opinion, as the training of English teachers improves and as professional standards rise, teachers become more and more capable and eager to make some curriculum decisions on their own.

At the same time, there is active parental interest in the schools and what is being taught in the schools. Moreover, organizations such as America's Future, the National Office for Decent Literature, the Citizens for Decent Literature, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the Anti-Defamation League seem to be increasing their surveillance and reviewing of suitable literature for adolescent readers. With what seems to be an increase in the activities of patriotic societies, one might also anticipate that censorship which attacks the political and social attitudes (or supposed attitudes) of the author will continue. Some censors will continue to see immorality or amorality in novels as part of a political scheme towards a "moral disarmament" of American youth. Many censors will probably continue to see violence, sex, and even obscenity and faulty grammar in novels as "things" which the adolescent reader will emulate and copy.

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[26] In the recent Supreme Court Ginsberg case the court decided to take into consideration the way in which the materials were advertised. Not only was the material judged in and for itself, but the further factor of its advertisement was a new concept for the courts. Analogously, it is conceivable that courts, in discussing censorship in schools, might consider the way in which the book in question is taught. This is, of course, conjecture on the part of the writer.

Censorship of controversial novels in the schools, then, will remain, but it will not always remain the same. It will reflect in the future as it has in the past different types and amounts of political, geographical and partisan pressures. The social conditions and their portrayal which disturbed some of the censors of Grapes in Oklahoma and California in the 1930's are no longer the problem they were then. Steinbeck's social criticism, because it is somewhat dated, lacks the sting that once antagonized many censors. At the same time, however, one might anticipate and notice an increase in objections to Huck Finn as civil rights leaders become more and more concerned with the image of the Negro.[27] The "hell" in Huck Finn today will not arouse the ire that Jim as a stereotype will.

As we have seen throughout the thesis, the problem of controversial novels and censorship in the schools is most complex. One can not find answers to the problems of controversial novels by falling back upon the old platitudes that the schools should be an open forum for discussing all opinions and all aspects of life, that the schools should broaden the student's perspective, or that the teacher should be treated as a professional.

When controversies do arise, they should be brought out into the open; schools should not accept objections to books unless the objector is willing to fill out a written complaint in a form similar to that proposed by the NCTE. The effect of reading upon behavior is often an implication behind many statements made by both censors and critics. As we have said before, studies of this topic are inconclusive. In this writer's opinion research is crucially needed on the effects of reading upon anti-social behavior, particularly on adolescents.

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[27] At the time of this writing students at the University of Massachusetts in Boston have been protesting the use of Huck Finn because of what they see as derogatory attitudes towards Negroes. Harper Lee's novel To Kill a Mockingbird has also recently been attacked for use in the schools because it deals openly with questions of integration. See Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom XVI, March, 1967.

Since censorship is unlikely to cease, teachers and those concerned with the English curriculum who do use controversial materials must be able to defend these materials. They must be familiar with what objections could arise and they must anticipate ways of responding. Teachers must be familiar with the books in question, with the professional literary criticism of the books, and with the atmosphere of restraints within the community in which they are to be taught.

APPENDIX A

SELECTED ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

THE EFFECTS OF READING UPON ANTI-SOCIAL ADOLESCENT BEHAVIOR

This bibliography is an attempt to compile materials both in support and refutation of those censors, critics, and others who imply or state directly that reading about anti-social behavior can cause anti-social behavior in the adolescent. Since the effect of reading upon behavior does not readily lend itself to experimental studies, much of what has been written on the subject consists of opinions of psychologists, psychiatrists, and others. The evidence is inconclusive and more research from controlled experimental studies to case histories is needed.

Adler, Mortimer. Art and Prudence. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1937.
"The situations of life which excite emotions make actions both possible and necessary; but imitations [including books] excite emotions and make action for a time, at least, both impossible and unnecessary. The soul is thus relieved. This relief is its catharsis."

Anderson, Meta A. "The Binet Schools of Newark" in Glueck, Sheldon and Eleanor, eds. Preventing Crime: A Symposium. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1936.
The author states that there is a relationship between reading and juvenile delinquency, but she attributes it to the youth's lack of innate ability to learn to read and therefore his subsequent failure to succeed in school.

Bloch, Herbert A. "The Inadequacies of Research in Delinquency Causation," *National Probation and Parole Association Journal* XXXI (1955), 30-36.
Comic books and literature are serving as scapegoats for the cause of delinquency. We must find out real reasons rather than relying on ready-made formulas.

Bloch, Herbert A. and Flynn, Frank T. *Delinquency: The Juvenile Offender in America Today*. New York: Random House, 1956.
The authors state that many reputable scientists believe that normal individuals who read of violence might react with violent behavior in an emotionally critical situation.

"Comic Books and Juvenile Delinquency," Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, Eighty-Fourth Congress, Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1955.
After hearing statements by experts on both sides of the question, the committee decided that further scientific study of the effects of reading upon aberrant behavior is needed. It did add, however, "There was substantial, although not unanimous agreement among the experts that there may be detrimental and delinquency-producing effects upon both the emotionally disturbed child and the emotionally normal delinquent." The report stressed the effect upon the delinquent and not the normal child.

Ellis, Albert. *The Folklore of Sex*. New York: Grove Press, 1951.
The author states that reading about sex does not make sexual offenders. Banning the material might, however, since reading about sex offers an outlet to many who might otherwise commit a sex crime.

Fellman, David. *The Censorship of Books*. Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1957.
Fellman quotes George S. Smyth, a children's court judge who stated that of 878 factors causing anti-social behavior, reading was not one of them, but that difficulty in the ability to read was.

Feinberg, Henry and Reed, Clyde I. "Reading Level of a Group of Socially Maladjusted Boys," *Journal of Social Psychology* XII (1940), 31-37.
This is a study of 150 maladjusted boys which showed a close relationship between delinquency and reading difficulty. It has been cited by members of the catharsis school of thought as evidence that if these boys had been able to read well, they would not have been maladjusted.

Fendrick, Paul and Bond, Guy. "Delinquency and Reading," Journal of Genetic Psychology, XLVIII (1936), 236-243.
A survey of 16-19 year old boys then in the N.Y. State Reformatory showed that none of the 187 boys had a reading capacity commensurate with his mental age. As with the Feinberg study, this has been used to imply that had they been able to read, they might not have become delinquents.

Freud, Sigmund. "On the history of the psychoanalytic movement." Vol. I, Collected Papers. London: Hogarth Press, 1956, 284-359.
Children who see aggressive models experience catharsis and show a decrease in aggressive responses.

Gellhorn, Walter. Individual Freedom and Government Restraints. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1956.
The author discounts reading as being important in forming anti-social behavior in adolescents. Behavior is determined before reading; the reading of fiction probably can serve as a catharsis for aggression and frustration.

Glueck, Sheldon and Eleanor. Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency. New York: Commonwealth Fund, 1950.
The authors discuss five contributing factors of juvenile delinquency. Reading is not mentioned as one of the contributing factors.

Hoult, T. F. "Comic Books and Juvenile Delinquency," Sociology and Social Research, XXXIII (1949), 279-84.
In comparing 235 delinquents with a comparable control group, Hoult found that the delinquents read many more horror, violence comics. He does not, however, see this as a cause of the delinquency, nor does he imply that they received any catharsis from the books.

Jahoda, Marie. The Impact of Literature: A Psychological Discussion of Some Assumptions in the Censorship Debate. New York: Research Center for Human Relations, 1954.
M. Jahoda says that reading matter does not cause attitude or behavior changes as much as is generally believed. "Direct experiences have a much greater directive power on human behavior than do vicarious experiences."

Karpman, Benjamin. *The Sexual Offender and His Offenses.* New York: Julian Press, 1954.
This psychiatrist states that salacious material often neutralizes any aberrant interest in sex that a possible deviate might have.

Kinsey, A. C. *et al.* *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male.* Philsdelphia: Saunders Co., 1948.
Adolescent boys may be sexually aroused by reading "love stories in books," but nowhere in the report does Kinsey show that reading contributes to any anti-social or delinquent behavior.

Kronhausen, Eberhard and Phyllis. *Pornography and the Law.* New York: Ballantine, 1959.
Psychologist authors differentiate between "erotic realism" and "hard-core abscenity." Because of case studies and interviews they believe that neither "erotic realism" nor "hard-core obscenity" lead to anti-social behavior in adolescents. They further suggest that "erotic realism" can serve as a catharsis for sexual impulses and have a useful function in sex-education.

Kvaraceus, William C. "Can Reading Affect Delinquency?" *ALA Bulletin*, XLIX (June, 1965), 516-522.
"Finally, reading must be viewed more as a symptom than a cause of adjustment or maladjustment. Reading tends to reinforce what is already present and what has already been learned or experienced, frequently as far back as the early childhood years."

Kyle-Keith, Richard. *The High Price of Pornography.* Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1961.
The author refers to statements by Senate investigating committees, judges, and psychologists to substantiate his claim that pornographic literature may be the stimulus which can awaken subconscious instincts and cause juvenile delinquency.

Muhlen, Norbert. "Comic Books and Other Horrors: Prep School for Totalitarian Society?" *Commentary*, VI (1949), 80-87.
The author questions if children who read or horrors and violence will not fail to have the proper regard for the sanctity of human life.

Mussen, P. H. and Rutherford, E. "Effects of aggressive cartoons on children's aggressive play," *Journal of Abnormal Social Psychology*, LXII (1961), 461-465.
A controlled experiment demonstrates that "exposure to aggressive fantasy in an animated cartoon stimulates child's aggressive behavior in play." No comparable experiments with the effects of reading were found by the authors.

"New York State Joint Legislative Committee to Study the Publications of Comics Report." New York: Legislative Document No. 37, 1954.
"The reading of crime comics stimulated sadistic and masochistic attitudes and interferes with the normal development of sexual habits in children and produces abnormal sexual tendencies in adolescents."

"Report of the Select Committee on Current Pornographic Materials," House of Representatives, Eighty-Second Congress, 1952.
The committee reports on writings which are "promotive of obscenity, immorality, and other matters of an offensive nature. "Promotive" is explained only by stating that stimulated thoughts lead to anti-social behavior.

Schramm, W. et al. *Television in the Lives of Our Children*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961.
Grade 10 students who were frequent TV viewers and infrequent readers scored significantly higher on a self-report measure of anti-social aggression than did frequent readers, infrequent TV viewers.

Stekel, Wilhelm. *Sexual Aberrations*. New York: Liveright Publishing Corp., 1952.
Stekel describes the case study of the "Bible of the Fetishist," in which a sadistic patient found, through reading and writing about his fantasies, an outlet which kept him from acting them out.

Waples, Douglas, et al. *What Reading Does to People*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1940.
"We have yet to find any comprehensive study of the 'effects' of students' reading."

Wertham, Fredric. *The Circle of Guilt.* New York: Rinehart, 1956.
In this case history of a teen-aged murderer, the psychiatrist author has a chapter on the effect of "creeps"--horror magazines. He says the boy was conditioned by them so that he was able to commit the crime.

______. *Dark Legend.* New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1941.
"It seems to me just as inexact to say fiction has no influence at all on people's actions as to blame crime on such fiction. Apparently anti-social impulses do not originate in that way. But when they once exist, added impetus may be given them by way of identification with a fictional scene."

______. *Seduction of the Innocent.* New York: Rinehart, 1953.
These are case studies of juvenile delinquents and the comics they had read. Wertham states that portrayal of violence stimulates hostile impulses and increases anti-social behavior.

______. *A Sign for Cain: An Exploration of Human Violence.* New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967.
"Unfortunately a great deal of art and literature has used the power of aesthetic expression to make violence attractive or seductive. In the individual work, this may have been only incidental or entirely unintended. In addition to the artistic result, this has had an effect on thought, feelings, and attitudes, however."

Wolf, Katherine and Fisk, Marjorie. "The Children Talk About Comics," in Lazarsfeld, Paul and Stanton, Frank, (eds.) *Communication Research*, 1948-49. New York: Harper, 1949.
The study showed how frustrated children, more than adjusted children, used active heroes of books as stimuli to aggressive behavior.

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